



JAMES ORROCK R.I.

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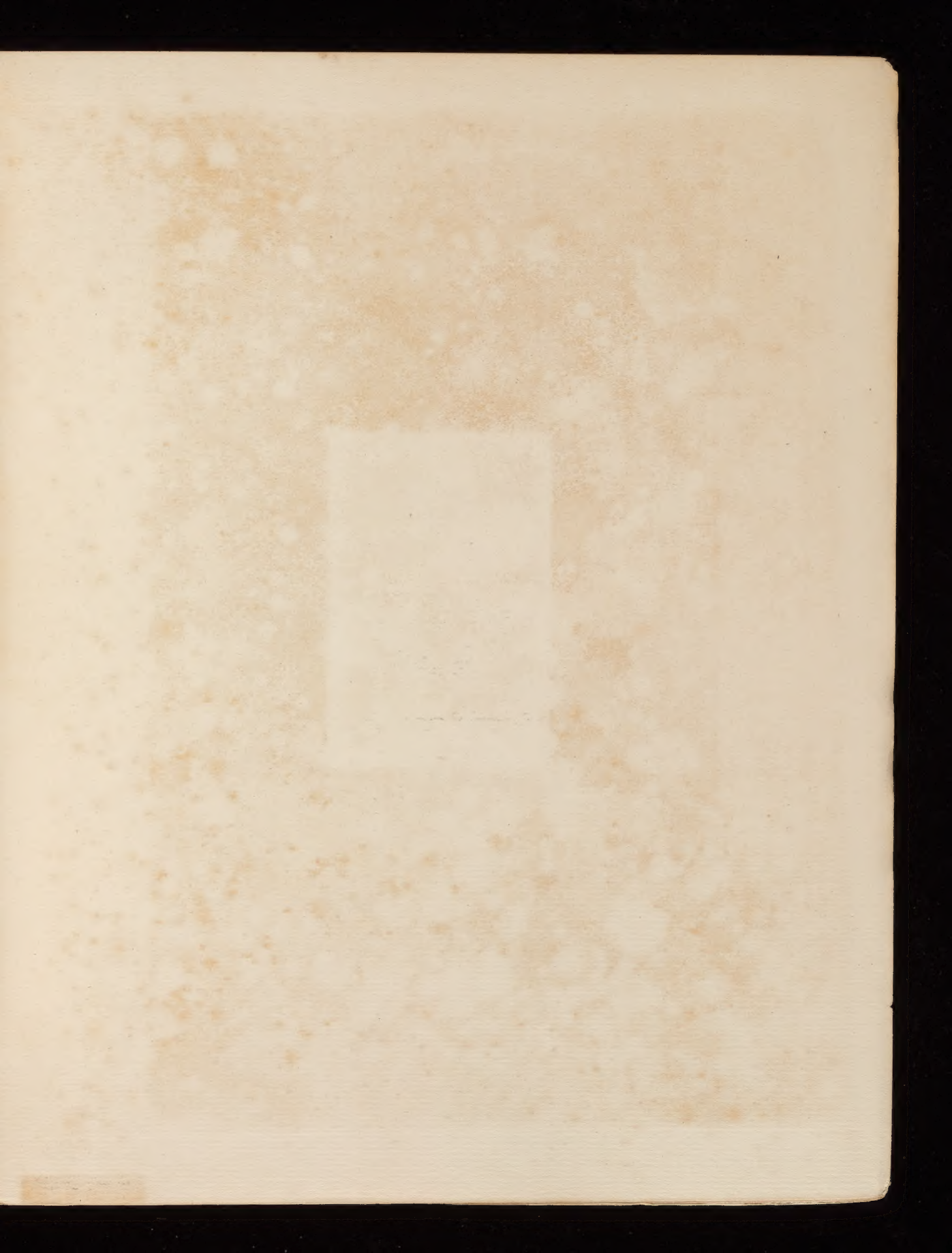
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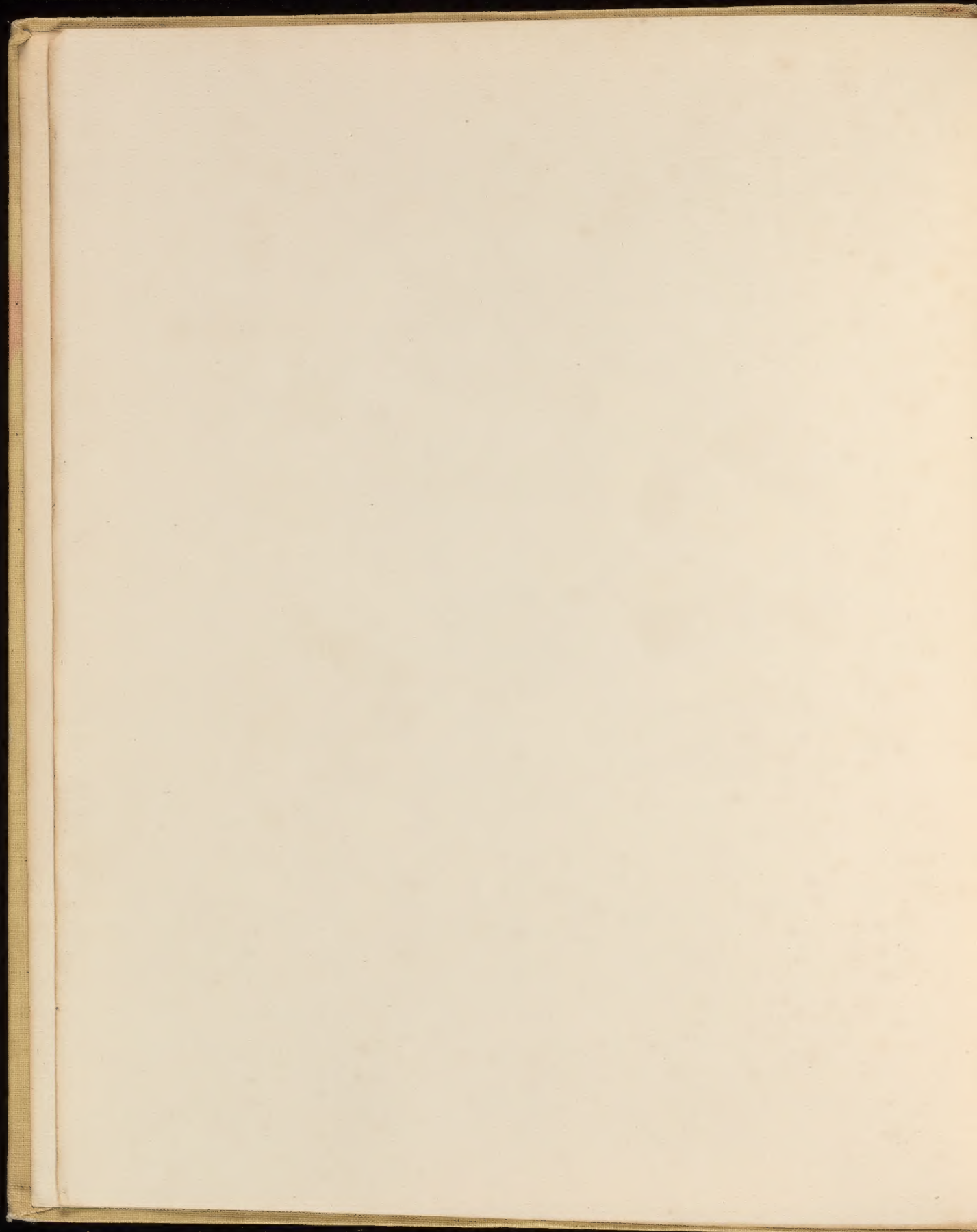
COLLECTOR



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JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

VOL. II

*Only Five Hundred Copies have been printed for sale
of JAMES ORROCK, PAINTER, CONNOISSEUR,
COLLECTOR, in Two Volumes.*

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W. B. Smith & Co. Boston

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James Orrick

JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

PAINTER, CONNOISSEUR,
COLLECTOR

BY

BYRON WEBBER

IN TWO VOLUMES
VOL. II

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" 'Mrs. Heugh' was also a portrait of this year [1873], and one that afforded Millais some amusement. He used to say that the family were so extremely religious that even the parrot whose portrait appears in the picture could not refrain from an occasional word in season, and frequently exhorted him to 'Let us pray' whilst the work was proceeding. That the result was satisfactory appears from the following letter from Mr. John Heugh, acknowledging the receipt of his mother's portrait:—

" 'From Mr. John Heugh.

" 'HOLMEWOOD, February 13th, 1873.

" 'DEAR MR. MILLAIS,—I must not lose a post in telling you that the picture not only arrived safely, but that it is magnificent. All my ladies are in raptures at the likeness, and at the picture—position, accessories, colour, tone are all in such harmony. They tell the story so simply and so truly, just as if one walked into the room and saw her in her calm, dignified, and reposing old age. I shall never be able to thank you enough.—Yours very truly,

" 'JOHN HEUGH.' "

Life and Letters of Sir John Everett Millais, P.R.A.

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By SIR J. E. MILLAIS, P.R.A.

“ ‘Shelling Peas’ was one of the ‘small and early’ pictures of this year [1880], and was presented to Leighton in return for his kind present of a statuette that caught Millais’ eye while taking a glance at the objects in the sculpture room the day before the opening of the Academy. Meeting Leighton a moment afterwards, he told him how he admired a delicate little bronze of a young girl turning to look round at a frog or some other reptile that had startled her. ‘I am so glad you like that,’ said the President, laughing; ‘I did it.’ And when the exhibition closed, he sent it to Millais as a present, with a charming letter such as he so well knew how to write. The picture is now in the possession of Mr. James Orrock.”

—*Life and Letters of Sir John Everett Millais, P.R.A.*

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"This beautiful example of the silversmith's art, as faithful in its quaint way to nature as it is fine in the technique of its modelling and chasing, was acquired by Mr. Orrock in what he considers was a fortunate moment, and has been cherished by him with a feeling which the sternly austere reasoner might denounce as bordering on the superstitious ever since. It has come to be known, jocosely, amongst his friends, they falling in with his humour as 'the oracle' (Orrock owl) or mascot! It was one of the pieces of plate stolen by a burglar who escaped comfortably with his booty. But the burglar was caught and the owl recovered!"

. SOME ODD LEAVES FROM A LIFE-LONG LIBRARY OF THE SKETCH-BOOKS OF JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

STUDY OF CLOUDS AFTER THUNDER, *and* STUDY OF STORM-SKY
ON CRIFFEL, DUMFRIES

NEAR HILTON, DERBYSHIRE

FONT IN ST. MARY'S CHURCH, LEICESTER

NEWARK CASTLE, ON TRENT

FISHING-BOATS AT BRIGHTON

TWO STUDIES NEAR ABER, NORTH WALES

OLD COTTAGES IN LEICESTERSHIRE

WITNASH CHURCH, NEAR LEAMINGTON

OLD BRIDGE, DREGHORN, NEAR EDINBURGH, *and* OLD GATEWAY
AT TUTBURY

CLOUD STUDY—AFTER RAIN

STUDY AT BRIGHTON

WINGFIELD MANOR, DERBYSHIRE

GATEWAY AT WINGFIELD MANOR

NEWTOWN, LINFORD, LEICESTERSHIRE

PISCINA AND SEDILIA, ST. MARY'S CHURCH, LEICESTER

WATER-COLOUR STUDY AT BRIGHTON

STUDY OF SEA AT BRIGHTON

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TOMBSTONE

WINDMILL AT WOODHOUSE, LEICESTERSHIRE, *and* EEL-TRAPS AT
BRAY, ON THE THAMES

STUDY AT PRESTONPANS (ARTHUR'S SEAT IN THE DISTANCE), *and*
STUDY OF "FLY-BOATS" ON THE SOAR

JAMES ORROCK

CHAPTER XV

Mr. Asquith, Q.C., M.P., on "The Function of Criticism"—Martin Arthur Shee on "The Winckelmanns and the Webbs"—Charles Kingsley as an art critic—Coleridge, Southey, Wordsworth, Hazlitt, and Lord Byron—Shee on the enlightened connoisseur and the vain pretender—"All descriptions of people would be thought critics of painting"—Ety's treatment by the critics—Gilchrist's recognition of a salutary change in their methods—*The Times*—Tom Taylor and Mr. Ruskin—*Punch*—Favourite butts—*Punch* on art-critics—*Punch* at its worst and best—*The Man in the Moon*—More favourite butts—The impress of the age—Thomas Hood—Club songs on Art—The late Edward Draper—Mr. W. P. Frith, R.A.—Indictment against the critics—Remarkable cases—Thackeray—Mr. T. Sidney Cooper, R.A., on art-critics—For and against—Linnell—His silly verses—Mr. Frith again—The capacity to see colour rightly—Three critics at variance—Dr. George Wilson on colour-blindness—Are there critics who are colour-blind?—"Changes of Ministry"—Their effect.

MR. ASQUITH, Q.C., M.P., in his address to the students in connection with the London Society for the Extension of University Teaching, dealt with the function of criticism. To commence with, he adjured his hearers "upon the threshold" to "disabuse their minds of one or two misleading or narrowing associations which had gathered round the term 'criticism' in popular thought and speech. In the eyes of a great number of people, a critic was nothing more than a censor—a critical attitude meant an attitude of disparagement, and criticism was only another name for the science of finding fault. According to the famous gibe of Lord Beaconsfield, 'The critics are the men who have failed in literature and art.' Whether the phrase was Lord Beaconsfield's own, or, as they were told, borrowed from Landor or from Balzac,

James Orrock

it expressed a view of professors of criticism which was neither uncommon nor unnatural in those who were their favourite targets. It was, of course, true that there had been eminent men in whom their own want of success in the shape of action or production had at once stimulated and soured the critical faculty: but it was not in this dwarfed and distorted sense that they were using the term that day. Denigration, whether it sprang from baffled rivalry, from a morose and critical temper, or from honest short-sightedness, often amused, was sometimes useful, might now and then, in the hands of a writer like Junius, exhibit some of the highest qualities of literary art, but it was not criticism." Extracts made here and there from Mr. Asquith's exposition of the principles of true criticism and clear definition of their restricted application, would no more do justice to his authoritative pronouncement than fragmentary quotations from "The Deserted Village" or Gray's "Elegy" would afford a just idea of the scope and beauty of either poem. "Artistic criticism," as a commentator remarked, "was not perhaps Mr. Asquith's strongest point," but it was comprehended in his treatment of the theme. And the principles which he enunciated applied with equal force to the criticism of art as they did to that of literature. These succeeding observations which are in the nature of maxims, selected for their separate yet harmonious aptness, appear eminently deserving of citation as a preface to the present chapter: "No one would be foolish enough to set up as a test of the due development of the critical faculty the capacity to compose an essay or to write a review. Some of the best critics whom many of them had known had never made themselves answerable for a line of printed matter." "If representation was the function of art, interpretation was the function of criticism. Might they not add that it was a sure sign of the degradation of a critic, as such, when he lapsed into the habitual use of catchwords and formulæ?" "Another distinguishing mark of criticism, in its best and largest sense, was that it should be impersonal. Criticism ought to aim at a disinterested appreciation

James Orrock

of whatever was worthy or unworthy in its subject-matter, and should not be merely or mainly a pretext for the display of the resources of the critic."

The artist and the art-critic were born together, and the examiner has been lauding or admonishing, instructing or condemning the performer ever since their birth. Neither artist nor art-critic has changed with the march of time. The approaching end of 1900 brings with it records of various phases of the nation's history. "A Century of Art Criticism," exhaustively chronicled, would, one conceives, contain much entertaining and instructive matter. The compiler of such a work might begin with excerpts from the opinions of Martin Arthur Shee; Etty's "friend Shee, an accomplished scholar and excellent poet, an orator and a gentleman." The wise saws of the art-critics of that period have been retyped by modern instances in our own time. You trace the resemblance as you might identify a family eye or nose, chin or complexion in a gallery of ancestral portraits. Shee, in his loftily scornful denunciation of art-critics, was chiefly concerned with "the Winckelmanns and the Webbs" of his day. In a note to the line

"And grateful Taste shall guarantee thy fame,"

in the second canto of his "Elements of Art," he says, "A statue of Paris, by Euphranor, particularly, he [Pliny] describes as so miraculously expressive, not only of the principal qualities of that gallant Trojan, but even of the most conspicuous occurrences of his life, that you might discover in him at once the *judge of the three Goddesses*, the *lover of Helen*, and the *slayer of Achilles*. Winckelmann, whose faith in the miracles of *ancient Art* is edifying to the whole community of criticism, relates this without a comment of surprise or incredulity." It was Shee's conviction that "genius produces critics, but is never produced by them; they follow submissively in the track of a great man, and turn round arrogantly, to intercept the progress of those who surpass him." On the

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subject of English painters whom the age depreciated he said, "Even the merits of Reynolds cannot be said to be sufficiently esteemed or acknowledged, out of the sphere of his profession. His radiance has not yet penetrated the dense fog that hangs upon the public taste; and although, to the honour of his brother artists, they applauded his genius while he lived, as much as they revere his memory now that he is no more; nevertheless, the mass of his countrymen, even amongst those who are called enlightened, have yet to learn that a British artist has rivalled the best age of painting, in some of the most arduous qualities of art—has equalled Titian in colouring, and surpassed him in grace."

Charles Kingsley—to leap over the years for a modified likeness to Wincklemann's adoption of Pliny's imputation of the soul of sentiment and the evidence of history to a group of sculpture—found the painter's private personal character in Henriette Browne's picture of "The Sisters of Charity." Said he, "Henriette Browne (or whatever her name in the world may really be) is said to possess a heart pure, noble, charitable, and pious. I believed it when I saw that picture: for had she not been what she is reported to be, neither would the picture have been what it is." A criticism of Kit Smart's hymns, for which appraisement Kingsley was peculiarly endowed, or of a complete gallery of Blake's mystic pictures from the same standpoint, what *would* it have yielded? Kingsley was on safer ground when he held forth in front of a landscape at a Royal Academy Exhibition, and pointing to the picture exclaimed, "That, sir, is not Devonshire earth!" Appeals to authority in art, as the most cursory reference, for example, to the lives of the poets shows, are calculated to confuse the appellant. Coleridge, who is grouped as a critic by Mr. Asquith with Lamb, Bagehot, and Matthew Arnold, was, in relation to the products of art, one of those persons who, as Tennyson has acutely said, "impute themselves." Barry Cornwall says that "He knew little or nothing of the art of painting; yet I have heard him discuss the merits and defects of a picture of the poorest class, as though it



BACK DRAWING-ROOM : PERGOLESI CABINET



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had sprung from the inspiration of a Raffaele. He would advert to certain parts, and surmise that it had been touched upon here and there: would pronounce upon its character and school, its *chiaroscuro*, the gradations, the handling, &c., when in fact it had no mark or merit or character about it. It became transfigured, sublimated, by the speaker's imagination, which far excelled both the picture and its author." On serious consideration, it will scarcely be denied that Procter puts Hazlitt in his proper place as a critic when he quotes Leigh Hunt as saying "cleverly, that his criticisms on art throw a light on the subject as from a painted window." A very pretty figure, truly, but what of the underlying fact? Well, that a critic who sees through coloured glass and describes the objects visible on the other side bears false witness. Coleridge, Hazlitt, and Southey come amusingly together in reference to the imperious art-critic's capacity as a painter. Writes Mr. W. C. Hazlitt,¹ "Southey, in a letter to Rickman, of December 14, 1803, speaks of my grandfather as having been at that time lately in his immediate neighbourhood, if not in his house. 'Hazlitt,' says he, 'whom you saw at Paris, has been here (at Keswick): a man of real genius. He has made a very fine picture of Coleridge for Sir George Beaumont; he has also painted Wordsworth, but so dismally, though Wordsworth's face is his idea of physiognomical perfection, that one of his friends on seeing it exclaimed, 'At the gallows, deeply affected by his deserved fate—yet determined to die like a man.'" One occasionally meets with such humour as the foregoing in art criticism to-day. As Dickens said of Scrooge's prize turkey, Wordsworth *was* a critic. At any rate, Haydon avows that "his knowledge of Art is extraordinary. He detects errors in hands like a connoisseur or artist." Lord Byron wrote, "Of painting I know nothing: but I like a Guercino—a picture of Hagar putting away Ishmael—which seems to me natural and goodly. The Flemish

¹ "Four Generations of a Literary Family," by W. Carew Hazlitt. (London: George Redway.)

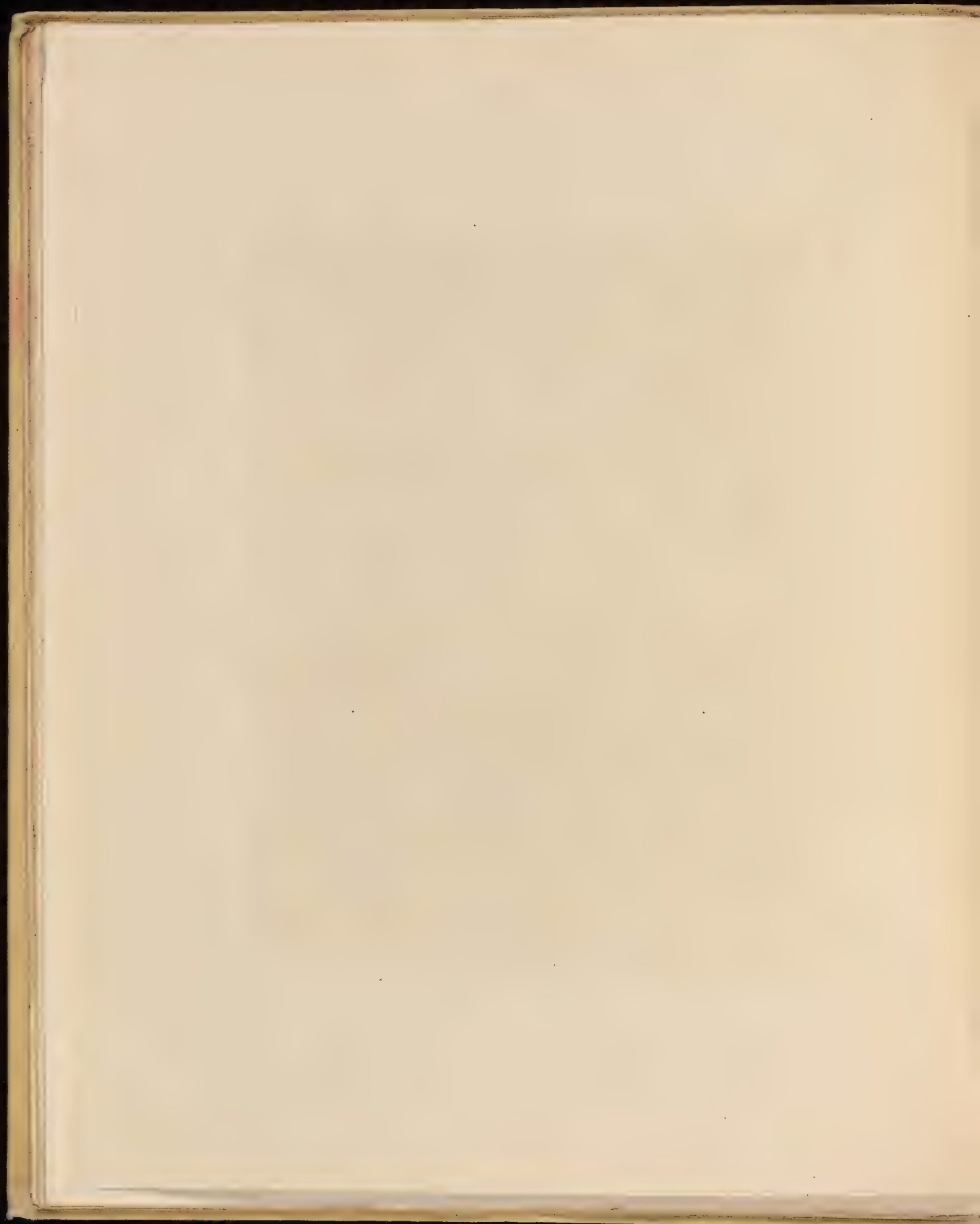
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school, such as I saw it in Flanders, I utterly detested, despised, and abhorred." He was "disgusted with Rubens." But, he said in another place, "I know nothing of painting; and I detest it." Browning had a rare appreciation of fine art, especially of paintings, the which "he read like a book." Many of his poems are impregnated and featured with his artistry. Mr. Ruskin was addressing a kindred spirit when he wrote to Tennyson "begging you, with the heartiest entreaty I can, to tell me when you are likely to be in London, and to fix a day, if possible, that I may keep it wholly for you, and prepare my 'Turners' to look their rosier and best. Capricious they are as enchanted opals, but they must surely shine for you." The poets in pigment are exacter critics of each other's work than are the poet-critics of the painters. Constable called Turner's pictures "dreams," and Uwins, in a fine burst of enthusiasm, the extravagance of which we can forgive, pronounced him "the mightiest enchanter who has ever wielded the magic power of art in any age or country."

Hoppner wrote to "My dear Shee," in a presentation copy of his "Oriental Tales," "I request your acceptance of this little volume, in testimony of our mutual friendship, and as a humble tribute to your virtues and talents; which none can regard with greater admiration, nor cherish with more affectionate zeal, than yours ever faithfully, J. HOPPNER." Shee replied on the fly-leaf of a copy of "Rhymes on Art," second edition, in the following terms: "My dear Hoppner,—In return for your elegant volume, let me request you will accept this little work as a testimony of ardent esteem and friendship. While the two books remain they will prove that, in a time of much professional jealousy, there were *two painters* at least who could be emulous without being envious; who could contend without enmity, and associate without suspicion. That this cordiality may long subsist between us is the sincere desire of, dear Hoppner, yours ever faithfully, MARTIN ARTHUR SHEE." While the painters were at that period, if at no other time in the history of the Art, jealous of and at



The Countess of Oxford.



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variance with each other, they were at one against the common foe. Reynolds had stigmatised the purblind critics and half-learned connoisseurs. Shee contrasted the enlightened connoisseur with the vain pretender. "The one is a liberal believer, who bows in rational homage at the shrine of taste; who puts not implicit faith in authority, and brings all the dogmas of criticism to the test of nature and truth. The other is a bigot, who propagates imposture, and blindly adores; who immolates living victims on the altar of the idol antiquity, and damns the creed of others without understanding his own." As a painter Martin Arthur Shee will perhaps not compare very favourably with any of the presidents of the Royal Academy, West perhaps excepted, but he was a doughty champion of English art, and he fought for it and its neglected exponents with unremitting ardour. Wilson had no greater admirer; he was one of Turner's earliest appreciators, and, with unusual perception, he foreshadowed the fruition of the English Water-Colour School. The critics, the false and pretentious members of the order, at any rate found in him an untiring assailant. He attacked them in prose and verse. In one of his notes to "Rhymes on Art," he says, "We find, also, that what is supposed to be received from Nature, is more a subject of vanity than that which we bestow upon ourselves; we may, perhaps, be content to be thought deficient in those things which depend upon our own exertions, but we do not like to be ranked amongst Nature's neglected children, or to be supposed ungraced with those qualities by which she usually distinguishes her favourites. Thus, he whose vanity never affects the praise of learning, does not so easily resign his pretensions to taste; he may admit that he has little wealth of his own acquiring, but he puts in his claim to that which he considers his inheritance. Hence it is that *all descriptions of people would be thought critics in painting*, and that the professor encounters in all societies those who unceremoniously contend with him in his proper province, and seem as little disposed to respect his judg-

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ments as to encourage his skill." Shee rightly described "the true connoisseur" as one who "can measure merit without considering the critical scale of reputation; he can give his opinion of a picture without first inquiring the painter's name; and has even the courage and the kindness to distinguish contemporary talent, though unsanctioned by time and authority." Resisting the temptation to quote at greater length, the following passage from one of Shee's most important notes to the "Elements of Art" is given for its succinct embodiment of the artist's abiding grievance. "In literature, the public taste is commonly directed by persons who have some pretensions to be heard on the subject: they are almost always professors or proficient in the art of which they speak; and often, in their powers of performance, vindicate their right to judge. But in the Arts, every man is a critic except the artist; and any man may come forward to direct the public judgment, except him who is best qualified for that office." Daniel Webb, a solemn ass who wrote "An Inquiry into the Beauties of Painting," was pleased to talk of "the splendid impositions of Rubens and the caricatures of Michael Angelo." He was accused by Winckelmann of stealing his ideas from Mengs the painter. Who cares? Who ever did or could care? Webb and such are shelved in the mausoleum which time appoints for such dust. When, at rare and widening intervals, their printed drivel is disinterred it is to cause one to marvel at the tolerance of a world that permitted its attention to be arrested for a single moment by what such pitiful prozers had thought they had to say.

Etty was an early sufferer—if he allowed himself to suffer—from an assault by an art-critic of the type of those denounced with such honest warmth by Mr. T. Sidney Cooper many years after. One "popular publication," Carey relates, spoke of the painter's "Pandora" as in "Drawing bad, the colouring worse, the whole invention contemptible"; and of Mr. Etty's "egregious vanity" as challenging "the rod" (the impudence of it!);

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concluding with counsel that the painter should "take to oysters and dead game." Gilchrist, Etty's biographer, waxes wroth over the self-appointed rod-employer's diatribe. He might have spared himself the trouble. An art-critic whose jaundiced eye was offended by Etty's colour, to say nothing of his drawing or invention, was rather a disordered subject for compassion, more a case for a medical man than a person to inspire scorn or excite indignation. Gilchrist, however, smites and spares not, and, the castigation over, inasmuch as he derives satisfaction from what he is persuaded is an improvement in art-critics and their methods, since the fool he belabours advised Etty to "take to oysters and dead game," his observations invite citation. It must be borne in mind that the art-critic he was dealing with was in practice in 1820, when Etty was thirty-three years of age; Gilchrist's comments on the "take to oysters and dead game" performance were written, as he states, thirty-three years later. Says the biographer: "The writer meant point in this. Such gentleman-like, well-studied criticism was a current staple thirty-three years since. It has, I need scarcely add, wholly disappeared in our discerning day. The blind no longer lead the blind. Knavish quackery, vulgar personal enmity, no longer delude a gullible public, under the mask of Arbiters of Opinion, literary and artistic. The random or maniacal words of aimless Incompetence—of men whose business is speech, whether or not supplied with apprehension, or knowledge, of the matter in hand—are no longer the Delphic Oracles of Drawing-rooms. We have left off applying for information to Dodona-Oaks—or Talking-heads. All, nowadays, know a good picture, or book, when they see it; are not to be led by the nose. 'Like people, like Priest' and Critic."

That Gilchrist had witnessed a change cannot be denied. When, however, he declared that all knew a good picture when they saw it he was going too far. There were painters at work when he wrote those sweepingly optimistic words who were neither discovered by the new order of art-critics nor appreciated by any

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influential section of the public. On the other hand, there were idols of the hour who have been razed to the dust since, while many of the unappreciated have come gloriously to the front, there to remain. They are dead. Several of them had to die before their work was known and justly valued. It would, alas! be only too easy to fortify this statement with a recital of names. Tom Taylor says, of the Haydon period, "that the private patronage of that day was petty and mean, though there was no lack of rich and very kind friends of artists." Naturally, importance was attached by the artists to the opinions of the press. These constituted a means of advertisement alike calculated to influence the independent patron, the dealer, and the general public. The *Times* critic, "after twenty-two years of abuse," noticed Haydon's "Uriel," to the painter's unbounded delight, in agreeable terms. Thackeray, however, himself a contemporary critic, was in disagreement with the tardy conversion of the *Times*. The leading journal discloses a mass of comprehensive art criticism, this twenty-two years' abuse of a crazy unfulfilled genius notwithstanding, of a sound and healthy character. The chronicle is catholic and not unsympathetic, and as such might pass with little qualification into a professedly dispassionate history of the English Art of the century. The powerful voice of the editorial columns has never been invoked in vain when the reform of a national art institution was called for or a grievance affecting the arts or their promotion had to be removed. To the "innovations," "discoveries," and "heresies" (popularly called) of new men and brotherhoods the *Times* ever accorded a hearing. Tom Taylor was opposed to the pre-Raphaelites. He said of their movement that it "was a revolt against the Academy by boys with the down still on their chins." On the other hand, Mr. Ruskin had denounced "the pure, perverse, and hopeless ignorance of the whole body of art-critics, so-called, connected with the press." The individual withers, and the *Art* is more and more. In the fulness of time, the leader of the pre-Raphaelite movement, having long

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outgrown the austere achievement which the school had mistaken for perfect mastery, became the President of the Royal Academy.

One of the earliest essays of *Punch* on the Fine Arts (in 1841) is as apt now as it was the day it was published. It is a "description of the private view of either the Royal Academy, or the Suffolk Street Gallery, or the British Institution, for 1842." Examples of criticism are classified under four heads, namely, "The unerring for portraits only," "The unerring for every subject," "For the half condemned" and "For the totally condemned." Stereotyped then, how often have those descriptions been parroted since! "The head is extremely well painted, and the light and shade distributed with the artist's usual judgment." "This is one of the cleverest productions in the Exhibition; there is a transparency in the shadows equal to Rembrandt." "A little stricter attention to drawing, as well as composition, would render this artist's works more commendatory." And so forth. There is a fine, fearless, cut-and-thrust style in *Punch's* attack on former exhibitions at Suffolk Street in 1842, which is far more engaging than the writer's soberer criticism. Indeed, the latter is poor stuff compared with "We have no longer the parsley-and-butter productions of Glover, nor the act-drop from the theatre in Goodman's Fields, which was wont to be shown here from season to season under the imposing title of 'A Grecian City in an Uproar,' or 'The Fall of Carthage at Sunrise,' by Mr. Linder, or some such name that has passed our recollection, and not worth groping in the darkness of obscurity for; Stanfield, too, has returned to scene-painting, with a greedy appetite for the applause and the tin which Tomkins and Marshall would otherwise have kept to themselves; and Roberts, with his chalk and coffee receipts for making pretty pictures, has ceded to the more vigorous and less meretricious pencils of younger hands." In the review of the "New Society of Painters in Water-Colours," we note a first footprint of history as interesting to the student of

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the national art as the print on the sand was to Robinson Crusoe. "This society grew from the monopoly of the old body of WATERMEN, who, finding a considerable quantity of comfort arise from their locating together, had very snugly bolted their doors against any intrusion from a younger waterman, and were thus fattening themselves upon the patronage of the admirers of their craft in chuckling privacy, seeing that the purchasers had no other *locus in quo* to draw their purse-strings."

Punch's review of the Academy Exhibition in 1844 is an example of laborious jesting long drawn out. The reader is not allowed a moment's respite. The horse collar is never for an instant withdrawn. The grim determination to be comic at all costs is shown in every touch and detail, down to making silly fun of the artists' names. Instead of Landseer, Mulready, Leslie, Turner, and Pickersgill, we have Sandseer, Mulrowdy, Ledsil, Trundler, and Picklegill. If the painters had possessed their poet Bunn, they might have had a few words with *Punch*, which would have made the assailant pause and see to his guard. The review is noteworthy because it signalises the commencement of those attacks on Turner,¹ which never ceased while the artist lived.

To employ a commercial phrase, one sample will represent the bulk.

"Trundler, R.A., treats us with some magnificent pieces.

"34. A typhoon bursting in a simoon over a whirlpool of Maelstrom, Norway, with a ship on fire, an eclipse, and the effect of a lunar rainbow.

" 'O Art, how vast thy misty wonders are,
To those who roam upon the extraordinary deep;
Maelstrom, thy hand is here.'—*From an unpublished poem.*

"4. (Great Room). HIPPOPOTAMUSES at play in the river Scamander.

"1311. The DUKE OF WELLINGTON and the Shrimp (Seringapatam, early saurian).

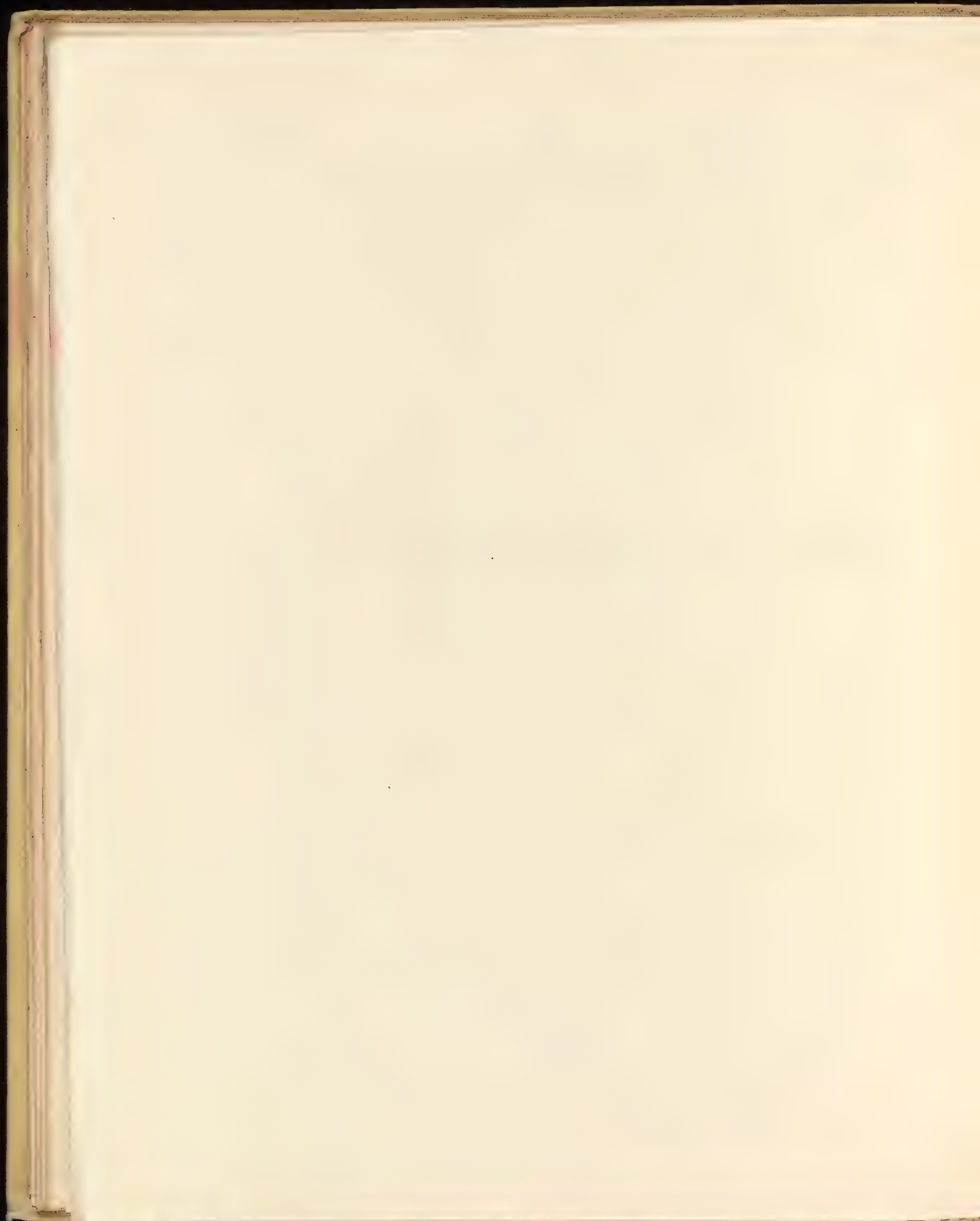
" 'And can it be, thou hideous imp,
That life is ah! how brief, and glory but a shrimp!' "

—*From an unpublished poem.*

¹ Chiefly made by Thackeray, as Mr. M. H. Spielmann ("The Hitherto Unidentified Contributions to *Punch*") has shown.



A CORNER OF THE BACK DRAWING ROOM



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"We must protest against the Duke's likeness here; for though his Grace is short, his face is not of an emerald green colour; and it is his coat, not his boots, which are vermilion; nor is it fair to make a shrimp (a blue one) taller than the conqueror of Assaye: with this trifling difference of opinion, we are bound to express our highest admiration of the work. It is the greatest that the English school of quiet landscape has produced. The comet just rising over the cataract in the foreground, and the conflagration of TIPPOO's widow in the Banyan forest by the sea-shore, are in the great artist's happiest manner."

It is remarkable that this review of the Academy Exhibition in *Punch* is illustrated by H. G. Hine, who afterwards became one of the greatest landscape painters in the English Water-Colour School. One wonders what he thought of Turner then and subsequently, and of Turner's revilers.

The decay of the pictures at the National Gallery, a national grievance which engaged the vigorous pen of Mr. Orrock at a later period, was pointed out by *Punch* in 1844, under the head of "A Hospital for Decayed Pictures," and a common-sense remedy suggested. In the next notice of the Royal Academy, "Turner" is said to "embody one of those singular effects which are only met with in lobster salads," and Etty is invited to join the *Punch* staff.

Punch on "Articles and Art" (in 1845) is at its very best. The critics are criticised, and, according to the prevailing gospel, taught their business. For instance:—

GENERAL MAXIMS.

"I. The power of criticism is a gift, and requires no previous education.

"II. The critic is greater than the artist.

"III. The artist cannot know his own meaning. The critic's office is to inform him of it.

"IV. Painting is a mystery. The language of pictorial criticism, like its subject, should be mysterious and unintelligible to the vulgar. It is a mistake to classify it as ordinary English, the rules of which it does not recognise.

"V. Approbation should be sparingly given: it should be bestowed in preference on what the general eye condemns. The critical dignity must never be lowered by any explanation why a work of Art is good or bad.

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"VI. Never use the word *picture*, say *canvas*; it looks technical. Never speak of a picture being *painted*; say rather, *studied* or *handled*."

"The following terms are indispensable, and may be used pretty much at random: '*Chiaroscuro*,' '*texture*,' '*pearly greys*,' '*foxy browns*,' '*cool greens*,' '*breadth*,' '*handling*,' '*medium*,' '*vehicle*.'"

Then follow instructions as to how to criticise pictures by Turner, Stanfield, Etty, and Landseer, and finally the critics of the *Post* and the *Globe* are pilloried.

In an encounter with S. C. Hall, editor of the *Art Union* (subsequently the *Art Journal*), on the subject of "Personality in Pictures," *Punch* comes off an easy victor. Hall in transparently veiled allusion is personified as Pecksniff. While it is impossible, even at this distant date, to avoid agreeing with *Punch* in the conflict, let us not forget that S. C. Hall in his time rendered real service to British Art. If he shovelled on his praise, not always without an ulterior object, and if he took himself too seriously in a sanctimoniously Pecksniffian manner, he at the same time (as in the case of Müller) was valiant and zealous in the righting of wrongs. In ceasing to pick from *Punch*, that chronicle of the past forty years may be safely left to speak otherwise for itself. For the most part it has been on the right side in matters of art, and during Tom Taylor's long connection with the journal, British Art and British Artists had in *Punch* a highly intelligent appreciator and doughty champion.

The Man in the Moon, edited at first by Albert Smith and Angus B. Reach, a sometime contemporary and antagonist of *Punch*, arrested attention in the art-world by its utterly irreverent treatment of the picture shows. The Brouchs, G. A. Sala, Shirley Brooks, and Edward Draper were among the contributors to this hard-hitting, rough-and-tumble, yet clever publication. In attack Albert Smith was more skilled in bludgeon than rapier practice, and the same might be said of his comrades of the pen. Cockneyisms abound in *The Man in the Moon*, together with

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appalling cockney rhymes. A rhyming skit on the British Institution may be quoted:—

“There is not a picture by Turner,
That lord of poetical smear,
Whom R——, of Poussin the spurner,
Declares is remarkably clear,
A spaniel by Landseer were cheering
(To send one or two was his wont),
Though horses are good when by Herring,
With ducks and with drakes in the front.

“Sing fol de rol, Guido and Titian,
With Reubens [*sic*] and Cuyt, be it known,
We like Flemish, Dutch, and Venetian,
In short, any school but our own.”

The “R——,” it is explained in a footnote, is “The Oxford Graduate,” otherwise Mr. Ruskin. This was in 1847. The late H. S. Marks, R.A., used to sing the song when he was a student, and he remembered every line of it to the end of his life. Etty, Inskip, Danby are ridiculed by the rhymers, and Lee, Creswick, Lance, and Goodall treated with condescending indulgence. *The Man in the Moon* was the first amongst comic periodicals to employ regularly the pencil as well as the pen in the satire or ridicule of pictures of the day. Years after, the idea was turned to worthier account by Mr. Gordon Thomson in the pages of *Fun*. Mr. Thomson’s pencil, however, charged as it was with abundant humour, and consistent in its exposition of the comic side of the idea expressed in the original work, was utterly devoid of offence. Turner was perhaps more of a butt than Etty for the rollicking wits of *The Man in the Moon*, but both artists were kept in stock, along with the Legitimate Drama, the Wellington Statue, and *Punch* for target practice. In the ribald ditty already quoted, the visitors to the British Institution are assured that

“Old Etty in morals won’t hurt ye,
With nudities fresh from the south;
He gives us a Jew very dirty
With orange peel out of his mouth.”

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Turner comes up continually; like the king's head in Mr. Dick's memorial. In "Guy Fawkes; or, a Match for a King," a burlesque-in-little, Guy observes:—

"Like Mr. Turner's, my designs, though good,
Not even by myself are understood."

In a proposal for a "High Art Hospital," the Drama, as was natural with Men in the Moon who were themselves dramatists with a natural desire to be acted, receives the hardest knocks. But "Artistic lunatics will be required to gaze at pictures by Dyce and Haydon for a certain number of hours a day, the house surgeon to regulate the extent of the indulgence." More Turner! "Motto for Mr. Turner's picture of 'Getting Tired of the Ball' in the Exhibition:—

'The azure moon, that through the verdant clouds
Bathes the vermilion waves with floods of blue,
Sees nought but yon gondola of pink haze,
And red-hot dots of men!'"

A showman ("now, my pretty dears," and so on) is invented to describe the Royal Academy Exhibition, with cuts. "Now, that," he points out, "No. 180, is a picture by Mr. J. W. Turner; realising the terms 'Going to Blazes.' First he thought he'd paint an old water-mill; then he turned his attention to a cabbage garden; after that some vermilion fell over it, and then he had a notion of turning it all into nobody knows what, but never had time to finish it." In those days some half a century ago, and in fact until the Royal Academy removed its exhibitions from Trafalgar Square to Burlington House, the grievances of the fortunate outsider who "got in" were not limited to being "skied" or "floored." His work was liable to be lost in the Octagon Room. For the glimpse it affords of the grievance, as well as the flash of light it casts on the regard in which some of the



The Toilet of Venus.



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painters were held in the 'forties, a verse from "The Lay of the Burked Painter," is cited :—

"I thought 'twould annihilate Etty,
Extinguish Mulready with ease,
Make Leslie and Frith appear pretty,
And utterly flummux Maclise.
I thought it would shine like a planet,
Through mere mediocrity's gloom !
Shine !—what am I saying ?—how can it ?
It's hung in the Octagon Room."

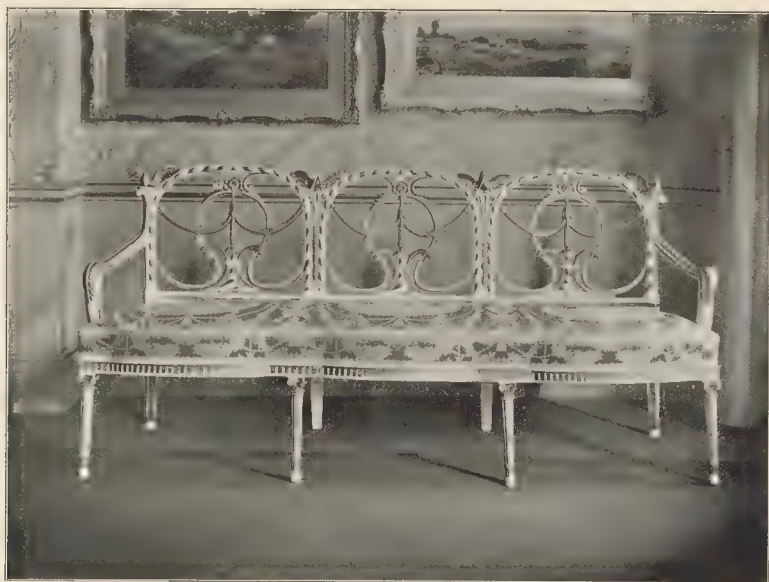
Other stock subjects for satire and ridicule in *The Man in the Moon* were high art, cleaning the pictures in the National Gallery, and the manufacture of old masters. "High Art in Painting," we were told, consists in drawing gigantic cartoons of warriors clad in no particular costume at all, backed up, according to the subject of the piece, by wooden-jointed angels, or fat Cupids, sitting on wet clouds. Some of the jests were far-fetched and not always fortunately applied. This, for example, in "The Pickpocket's Love,"—

"High noon in the city, high noon on the mart,
And the pickpocket's off to his work on high art,
While his Polly looks blue as a picture of Cuypp's
As she picks out the marks from the corners of wipes."

In a burlesque report of a commission to inquire into the process of cleaning the pictures in the National Gallery, "Solomon Levi thought that by persisting in cleaning old paintings, they might be restored to their original state. Some of those in the National Gallery were fast approaching that state. By original state, the witness said he meant the bare canvas." The same line of satire is pursued in the statement that "Mr. Eastlake writes to contradict the report that the new patent street-cleaning machines have been used over the pictures in the National Gallery."

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In the Royal Academy *The Man in the Moon* finds fair game for his shafts, and he does not make unamusing sport. The humour of it consists in treating the Academy as a boys' school. "The boy Maclise is making great progress—backwards. He never, in his best days, had more or higher fancy than would have enabled him—had he been a stage manager—to arrange a *tableau* for a thundering melodrama, with lots of robbers, champions, captive princes, and so forth; but he has now sunk to such a state of pictorial degradation as positively to be unfit for painting anything but iron pincers, copper warming-pans, steel fenders, pewter-pots, or frescoes for the House of Lords." Of "Master Etty, who may indeed, from the length of time he has been dabbling in paint-pots, have some claim to the title of an ancient master," it is said that "he does not favour us with his usual batch of brown nymphs—ladies who never appear to have milliners' bills." The next is in every respect a favourable example of the humorist's treatment. "Our principal quarrel with Master Linnell respects, or rather has no respect for, his sky. We are not aware that the clouds, on the eve of the Deluge, were temporarily withdrawn from duty and replaced by feather-beds and bolsters. With respect to the ark, the painter has evidently derived his notions from the models of that early specimen of naval architecture preserved in the Lowther Arcade. As a whole, we think that the painting ought to be taken down, and the artist hung in its place." The tea-tray was employed so frequently by the funny men in relation to the works of the landscape painters that it became tiresome, while ceasing to be funny. *The Man in the Moon*, however, elaborated the metaphor in the following manner: "Master Danby's Tea-tray is really a very pretty piece of furniture, representing, as it does, an ocean of tea, before the milk has been put in, with a fine horizon of deep rich coffee grounds." There is a cut in *The Man in the Moon* entitled "Etty mixing his flesh tints." It represents the painter with a shovel and a heap of mortar, which mixture he is turning over.



PART OF A PERGOLESI SUITE



James Orrock

The accessories include a trowel, a hod, and a couple of buckets. If the readers of the journal fifty years ago were amused by the design, they must have been as easily tickled as were the friends of Mr. Peter Magnus when that gentleman signed himself "P.M."

It was the age of the Gent and the Casino, of the Coal Hole and the Cider Cellars, of a rowdyish Bohemia of literature and journalism, as well as of a rough and theatrical Bohemia of art, and the art-critics of *The Man in the Moon* railed and jeered and laid about them after the manner of their order and the time, with elephantine playfulness, pitilessly, with little knowledge and less humour. Hood, who was a poet of manners—of *good* manners and of good humour—touched on art and artists, but without offence. In "A Singular Exhibition at Somerset House" he sketched "a large and vulgar dame, with arms deep red and face the same, showing in temper not a Saint," who vented her wrath on the keeper of the Royal Academy because "David's Cow" was not in the Exhibition:—

"I haven't seen a picture high or low, or anyhow,
Or in any of the rooms, to be compared with David's Cow!
You may talk of your Landseers, and of your Coopers and your Wards,
Why, hanging is too good for them, and yet here they are on cords!"

And, again, foreshadowing a French custom, while commending it to the notice of the R.A.:—

"If it only hung three days a week, for an example to the learners,
Why can't it hang up, turn about, with that picture of Mr. Turner's?
Or do you think from Mr. Etty you need apprehend a row,
If now and then you cut him down to hang up David's Cow!"

A curious investigator, who had a fancy for the task, might with little trouble, and abundant evidence to encourage his search, find the origin of the Bohemian Club song on art and artists in

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The Man in the Moon period. At all events, one of the earliest of those ditties was written by the late Edward Draper, who was Albert Smith's particular friend and, in respect of the periodical in question, a right-hand man. It was called "Vandyke Brown." Surviving members of the Circle Club have frequently heard the author's voice in—

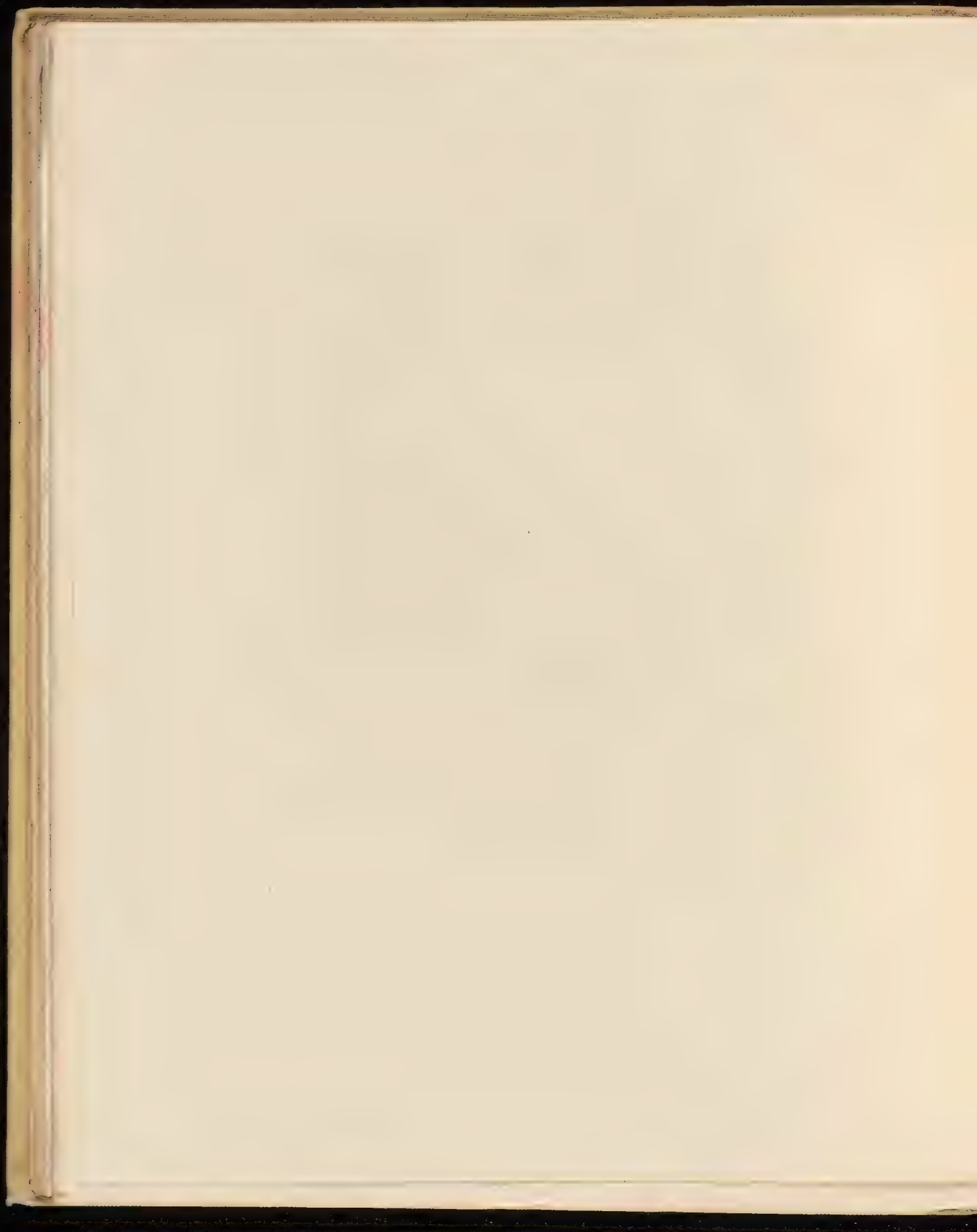
"I painted once a cow and calf, the hide as soft as silk;
When I stuck it in the window, folks came in to ask for milk;
I put it up to auction, but I couldn't knock it down—
Such firmness and such vigour in my Vandyke brown!

Turner, Etty, Landseer, Lance, or any man,
May paint away according to a special fancy plan,
But the way to paint a picter that'll put 'em down,
Is to scumble in your shadows with your Vandyke brown."

There is not a sunnier-natured man than Mr. W. P. Frith, R.A. He has taken life like a genial philosopher. Its failures have but transiently depressed, and have never soured him, while its successes—in his case more than once amounting to distinguished triumphs—have neither foolishly inflated him nor added a hair's-breadth to his self-esteem. And, then, Mr. Frith is gifted with the saving grace of humour. If he has not always found good in everything, he has regarded most things with serenity. Such being Mr. Frith, and such his habitual mental attitude, his views on art-critics and art criticism (one by no means the inevitable product of the other) arrest particular attention. He, of all contemporary English painters the most popular, and therefore the most extensively criticised, will be heard with interest in the matter. In the eleventh chapter of Mr. Frith's "Autobiography and Reminiscences," a chapter headed "My First Success," he writes, "As poor Haydon said to us in his lecture on the subject of Public Criticism, 'It is no doubt pleasant to read printed praise attached to your name; but if you live long enough, you will find your name in the papers in a form that will make you wish it out again.' I was not long in experiencing the truth of this. One criticism on 'The Vicar



Low Life.



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of Wakefield' picture in a leading paper began thus: 'Mr. Frith is a rising artist, and he has already risen to the height of affectation,' &c., &c. This is all I can remember, but much more of similar severity followed. I would here advise all artists, young and old, never to read art criticism. Nothing is to be learnt from it. Let me ask any painter if, when he wants advice upon any difficulty in the conduct of his work, he would seek it from an art-critic? No, I reply for him; he would apply to an artist friend. But though, as I believe, no advantage accrues in any case to an artist from public criticism, much undeserved pain is often inflicted, and even injury caused, by the virulent attacks that sometimes disgrace the press. For many years—indeed, ever since I became convinced of the profound ignorance of the writers—I have never read a word of art criticism." One inferentially estimates the value as well as the dignity of the art-critic who writes "comic copy" when we read: "The 'Coming of Age' was very kindly placed in one of the much-coveted angles of the Middle Room; the Press notices, then eagerly read by me, were on the whole favourable. Thackeray, advocating the more frequent illustration of modern life, asked in a review of the Exhibition, 'Why, when a man comes of age, it should be thought desirable that he should come of the age of Elizabeth?' and another critic suggested that it would have been better if such an ill-drawn idiotic youth as Mr. Frith represents had been cut off in infancy, and so been prevented from 'coming of age' at all." But Thackeray (who was a mediocre draughtsman, although the worshipful Charlotte Brontë, who with her sisters "could draw," does not seem to think so) was, when he chose to be, a terrible fellow as an art-critic (*cf.* Turner). In relation to his picture "Claude Duval," Mr. Frith says, "The critics were severe upon poor 'Claude.' I forget the words of their objurgations; but I remember the advice of one of them, which was that I should devote myself to the illustration of the *Newgate Calendar*, with some compliments as to the fitness of my art and me for the office." Incidentally, Mr. Frith mentions a criticism of one of Landseer's pictures which is too diverting to

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be omitted from the present recapitulation: "The British Gallery was a favourite place of exhibition with Landseer, many of whose less important works were shown there. Amongst the rest, I remember one of a hare attacked by a stoat; the stoat had caught the hare by the throat, and one could almost hear the screams of the poor creature in its hopeless resignation to its fate. I do not know who may be the happy owner of that splendid work, but if he should happen to read these lines, and will then look at the back of his picture, he will find a criticism of the picture which is unique, or nearly so, in the annals of that science. It is to the following effect: 'In Mr. Landseer's picture of a rabbit attacked by a weasel, it appears to us that the rabbit is more like a hare, and the weasel has none of the characteristics of that species of vermin, for it is more like a stoat.'"

Mr. Frith says of a picture of his, the subject of which was suggested by Boswell's "Life of Johnson": "In the interval of waiting, Garrick is described as holding the lapels of Johnson's coat, the sage looking down upon him with tender interest. As there was nearly the difference of a foot in the height of the two men, Johnson must have regarded the actor from a physical as well as a moral elevation sufficiently striking; and though I took especial pains to ascertain the precise height of the two figures, and placed them on the canvas in their true relation to each other, I was told by a critic who had probably never given two thoughts to the matter, that 'Johnson was too tall.'"

A recollection of the treatment which Mr. Frith and other professional members of the committee that had been formed to make arrangements for the production of a statue of Lord Byron suffered from impelled him to deliver his views on art-critics at some length and with no small fervour. Those views are reproduced here because they not only express what was in the painter's mind, but because they are in effect the sentiments of hundreds of persons practising the arts of painting and sculpture for a livelihood, and, it is believed, not at all limited to artists. Writes Mr. Frith: "We were outvoted

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by gentlemen who were God-gifted with a knowledge of art which all our lives' devotion had failed to give us—in their opinion. Disraeli said 'the critics are those who have failed in literature and art.' With the judges of literary work I have no concern; but in respect of those whose business it is to write public criticisms on art, I have to say that few of the gentlemen or ladies who praise or condemn modern painters and sculptors have practised art in any form, so the charge of their having failed in it falls to the ground. They are people of some literary attainment, as is evident by their writing. But the mystery attending their wonderful knowledge of art in all its forms is one of those things—if I may use the words of that eminent peer, Lord Dundreary—"that no fellow can *understand*." When I bring to my memory the many instances of the diffidence in expressing opinion on art, so often witnessed by myself in such men as Landseer, Turner, and others nearly as eminent, I cannot help being awe-struck by the laying down of the law by our modern experts. Infallibility is not monopolised by the Pope; but what can be said for a public which is led by printed opinion expressed by persons who would not be listened to for a moment if their efficiency as judges could be gauged? If we could be judged by our peers, as literary men are, we should be profited, in all probability. What would writers say if a body of artists were employed to direct public taste in literary matters? Surely the two positions are equally absurd."¹

Mr. T. Sidney Cooper, R.A., whose extraordinarily long and busy life—he was born in September 1803—and necessarily intimate knowledge of several generations of art-critics adds value to his opinion, has given it as his conviction that upwards of

¹ "—And did you step in, to take a look at the grand picture on your way back?—'Tis a melancholy daub! my Lord: not one principle of the pyramid in any one group!—and what a price!—for there is nothing of the colouring of Titian—the expression of Rubens—the grace of Raphael—the purity of Dominichino—the *corregioscity* of Corregio—the learning of Poussin—the airs of Guido—the taste of the Carrachis—or the grand contour of Angelo.—Grant me patience, just heaven!—Of all the cants which are canted in this canting world—though the cant of hypocrites may be the worst—the cant of criticism is the most tormenting!"—*Sterne*.

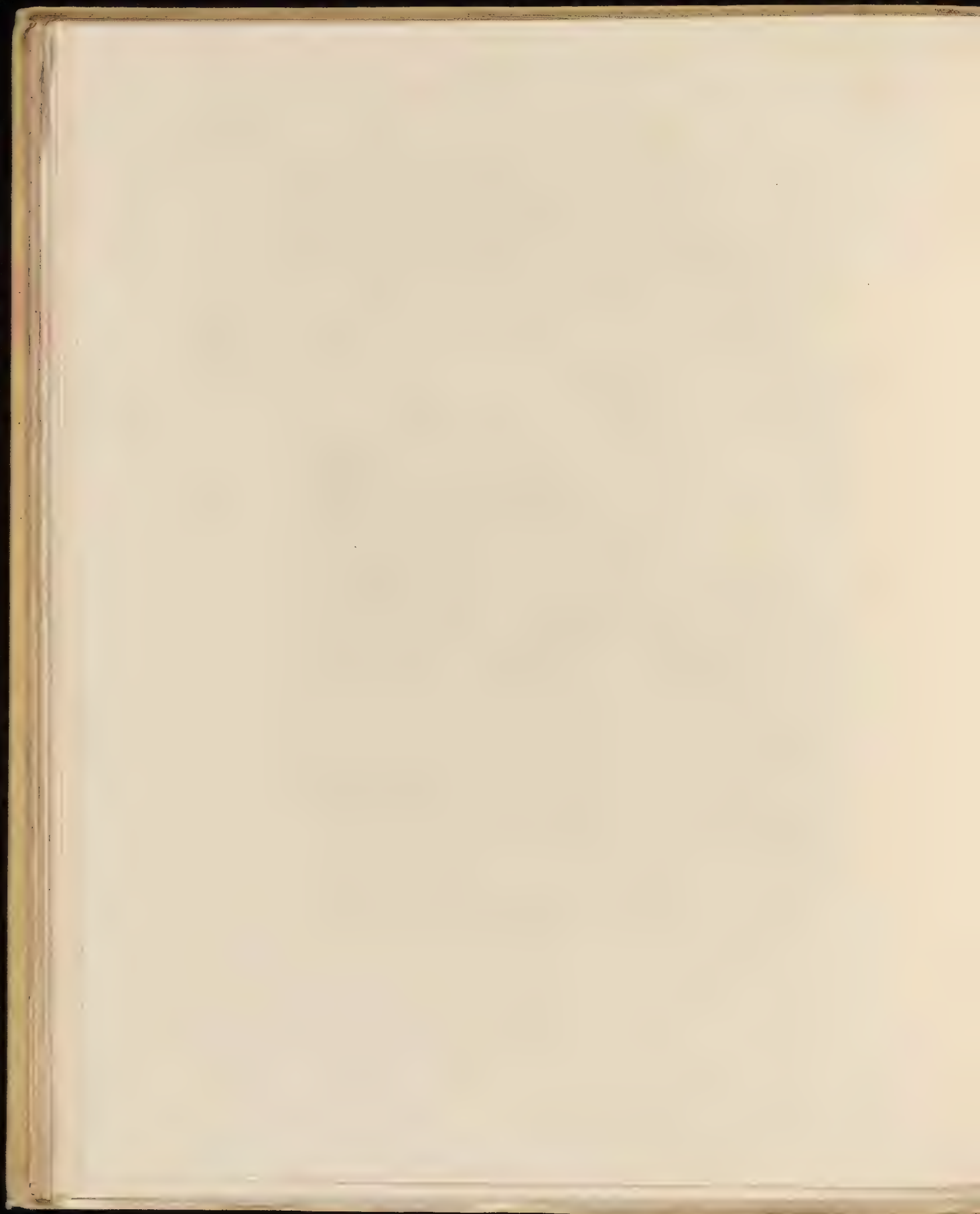
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half a century ago those authorities "were, without doubt, men of sound judgment, who not only had knowledge of the subject upon which they wrote, but were also imbued with a love for art and a desire for its advancement." He mentions in this comprehension such men as Leigh Hunt, Jourdan, and Williams, "also Carter Hall, a generous critic," Dallas and Tom Taylor, and, "to go rather back," "Northcote and William Hazlitt," "as giving most valuable criticisms on art generally." Of the present extensive army Mr. Cooper declares that "we have, indeed, a host of critics, but very few of them, I fear, are free from prejudice and egotism, or show much genuine artistic knowledge." An abridgment of his lengthy and weighty indictment amounts to this: There is not sufficient impartiality shown in the expressed opinions of the newspaper critics, who use cant and stereotyped phrases which are of no use as criticisms to men whose reputation is established, while the encouraging word of praise to poor struggling beginners is withheld. He has been pained and surprised to see many very promising works by new or unknown men either spoken ill of or not mentioned at all. While the chances of the young artist may be ruined by an adverse criticism, the matter is of most serious import to all men of the profession. "I often wonder," writes the venerable painter, "how the editors of the really good papers, whose opinions on all subjects are supposed to have been thoroughly weighed before being given to the public, can allow such heartless articles to appear in their columns as one sometimes sees in sweeping condemnation of the efforts of beginners in art, who, with judicious aid and patronage, might in time rise to eminence."

Linnell, one of the grandest landscape painters in the English School, and a portrait-painter of distinction, was, if we may judge him adequately from the published records of his life, indifferent to the opinions of art-critics. He would appear to have cursorily read the dicta, but they were to him no more than dust in the balance. He kept an unflinching eye and firm hand



The Corsair.





The Woodcutters.

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on the main chance. He was his own brewer, baker, and wine importer "direct from the growers." He was, as they say in Yorkshire, "a durable hand at a bargain." When he built his houses, he made it a condition with the builder that part of the cost of the work should be taken out in pictures of the artist's own painting. Linnell, by his amazing industry and extreme thrift, amassed a large fortune, not "for to hide it in a hedge, nor for a train attendant, but for the glorious privilege of being independent," and to provide for his family. We meet with Linnell and a distinguished art-critic, and with the journal which that undoubted authority on art worthily represented, more than once in the course of the painter's biography.

In one of his letters Linnell writes: "Lots of bad pictures in the Exhibition. Hook's are excellent, and he is most hearty. I am going to see him. Redgrave also is very friendly. He has an exquisite picture of trees and water—no figures. Webster, Herbert, Creswick and Cook [*sic*], all hearty and congratulatory. Sir F. Moon, ex-Mayor, and Mr. Field, who introduced me to Tom Taylor, have promised to come and see me."

The biographer adds: "Tom Taylor paid his promised visit, which gratified Linnell, who greatly admired his poems and satirical writings in *Punch*. Taylor appears to have been a genuine admirer of Linnell's landscapes, and generally had a good word to say in their favour. One year, however, in writing of the Academy pictures, he ventured to be less complimentary than usual, and the artist was at once told by some of his friends that there was something wrong, and that he ought to send the critic a cheque for £50. A strange reflection, surely, on the supposed relations between painter and critic." Tom Taylor, or any other critic of his eminence and responsibility, addicted to *chantage*! One refuses to believe that Linnell himself regarded the idle suggestion of "some of his friends" in any other light than that of a coarse and flippant jest. Linnell (as is noted elsewhere) was, like Silas Wegg, in the habit of "dropping into poetry." When

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the *Times* described his "Hayfield" as "a poem of rural nature," he was delivered of the following:—

"The *Times* says my picture is a poem—
Tooral-ooral-lay!
A poem of rural nature—
Oh, the dear old crayture!
Tooral-ooral-lay!
The *Times* is surely growing better,
Obligation upon me to lay;
If so I must remain his debtor,
For to such I never pay.
Rural tooral-ooral-lural,
Wide awake I say!"

In the introduction to *Further Reminiscences*, Mr. Frith wrote: "I confess I think that when the critic is dealing with matter of which his own pursuits have made him a competent judge, his mode of expression is far more satisfactory than it is when he criticises pictures of the qualities of which in all probability he knows nothing at all. I have been called over the coals a good deal for the freedom of my expression regarding the incompetence of art-critics. I could multiply instance after instance in proof of it, but that is needless, for the critics are for ever supplying the proofs themselves. Hazlitt abused Reynolds; Horace Walpole said Hogarth was no painter, but a master of comedy with a pencil. In the year 1842, or thereabouts, Etty exhibited a picture called 'To Arms, ye Brave,' in which the power of his matchless painting of flesh was fully displayed. I read in a daily paper the following remarks which did duty for criticism: Number so-and-so, 'To Arms, ye Brave!' (W. Etty, R.A.); a parcel of people exposing themselves in a manner that calls for the interference of the police.

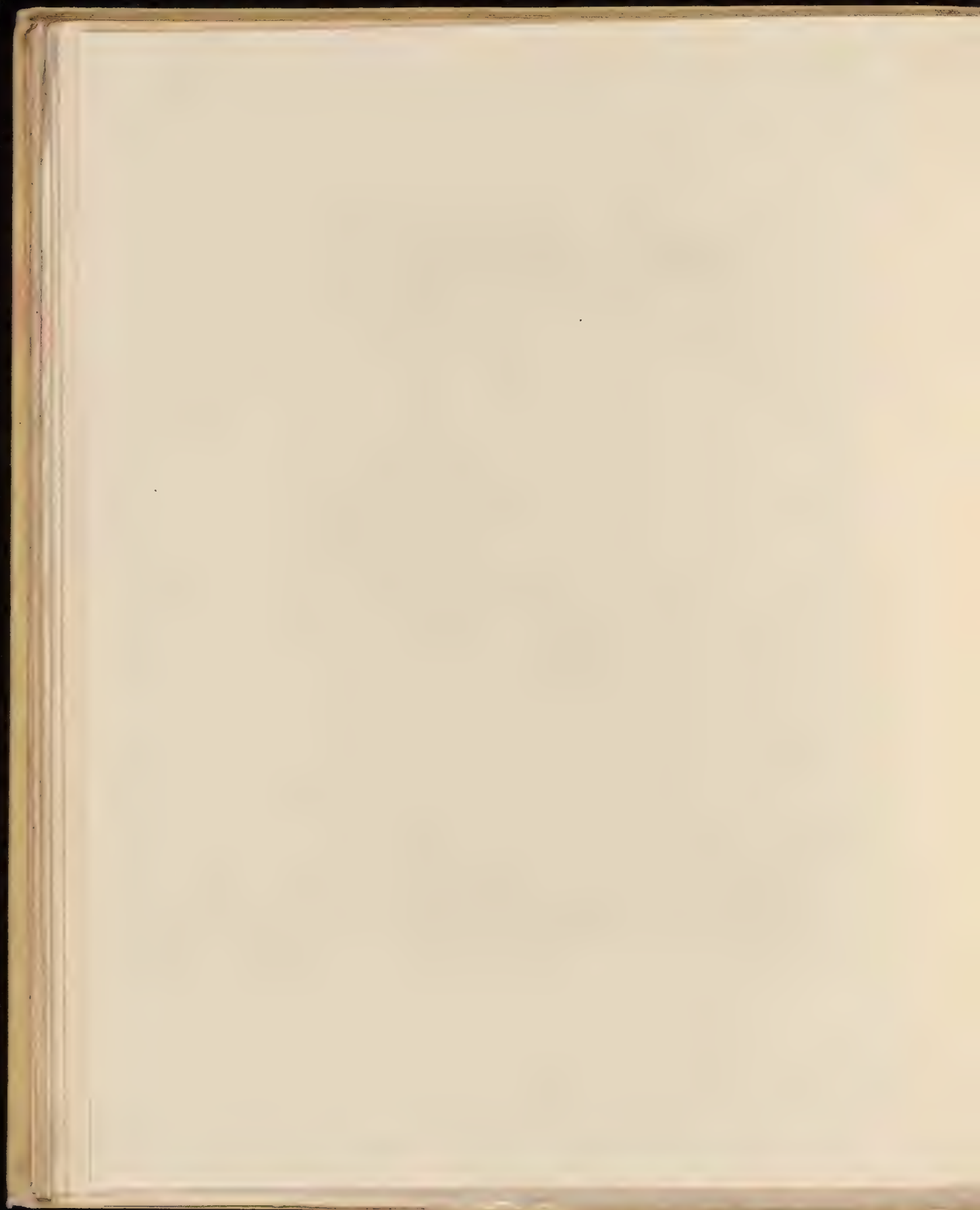
"The power of the press is enormous, and greater care and knowledge should be used in the wielding of it. I know an instance of the loss of the sale of a picture through an off-hand remark of a great art-critic. . . . I have known pictures praised



The Woodcutters.

John Edward 1872

John Edward 1872



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by a newspaper in one exhibition, and when the same pictures were exhibited in another place, the same writer in the same paper abused them. A *half-length* portrait of Sir Charles Barry by Pickersgill was criticised by a gentleman who never could have seen it, for he said it had the common defect of modern *whole-lengths*, the man's feet were not flat upon the ground; in fact, he stood upon his toes. Creswick, the landscape-painter, sent two empty frames to the British Institution to take their places upon the walls pending the finishing of two landscapes destined to fill them. The pictures were admitted at the last moment, too late for a critic to have seen them. The painter's surprise may be imagined when he read an abusive article, in which he was said to be worse than ever, and fast falling into a condition that would make it a world's wonder that he had ever attained a notable position in art at all."

The capacity to see colour rightly is not, one ventures with great humility to submit, as common as, judging from the unquestioning acceptance of the art-critic's declarations on the quality and gradations of colour in a picture, readers of art-criticism would appear to imagine. Are there art-critics who are colour-blind? The question probably appears monstrous. Nevertheless, it is put and it must stand. One of the most eminent of American draughtsmen, a black-and-white artist, it is true, but a designer with the subtlest sense of what are called "values," is unable to distinguish red from green. If an artist, why not an art-critic? A few years ago a remarkable picture of a Breton peasant was exhibited at Tooth's well-known galleries in the Haymarket. It was by Dagnan-Bouveret, and was justly accounted an extraordinary, a daring piece of colour. A commentator said of it, "One knows that this shy figure illumined by reflected light—iridescent, tantalising as a will-o'-the-wisp—was but the medium with which the artist chose to develop the problem, the scheme of colour, that palpitated in his senses, calling for expression." Another writer described the picture as

James Orrock

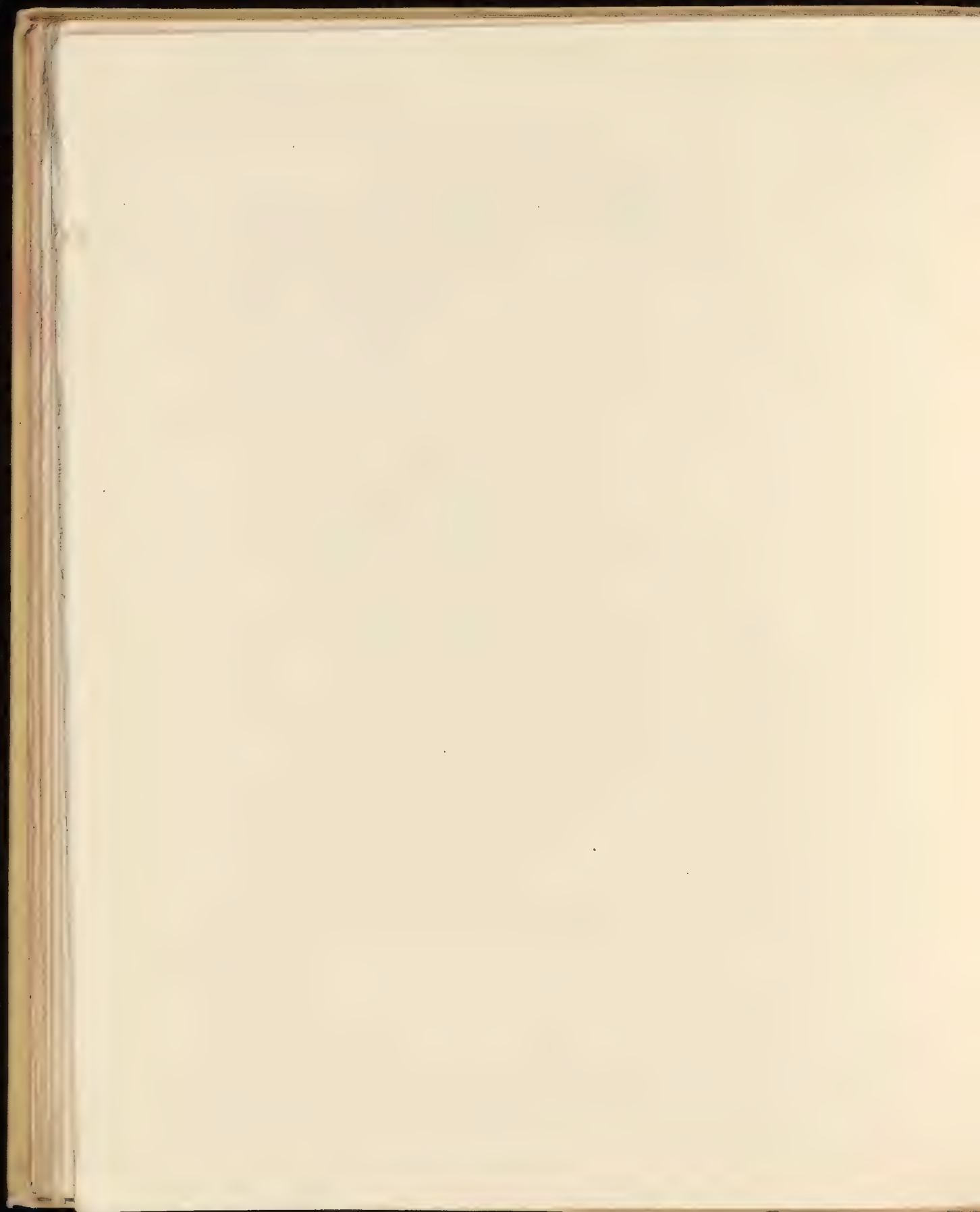
"a poem of colour and craftsmanship." And now mark what follows. One critic spoke of the "sea-green costume" of the boy; according to another, that same boy wore "a greenish jacket bound with black"; while a third said, "he wears a jacket of pale grey." The three critics were representatives respectively of leading London papers, and one of them is a prominent writer on pictorial art, and the author of an accepted work on a great English landscape painter. The inference to be drawn from these instances of diversity of colour vision is, or should be, obvious enough. One may, nevertheless, be permitted to underline it by observing that the critics in question would not see the colouring of any picture with exactly the same eyes. Differing in their identification of the primitive colours, or of the primitives slightly tinged and amalgamated for a toned passage in a picture like that of the peasant boy's jacket, how could they be equally trusted to follow the infinite, the mysterious semitones of colour—for accurate description in (for example) a masterpiece of Turner's water-colour art?

Dr. George Wilson,¹ an authority on the subject of colour-blindness, has amassed facts and cases within the pages of his book that are calculated to give pause to those who would claim for any considerable number of individuals of both sexes entire freedom from the defect. He says in his preface: "The subject was one but remotely connected with my customary studies, and I did not intend to do more than two or three papers upon it. As examples of colour-blindness, however, multiplied on my hands, and the theoretical and practical importance of many of the questions connected with its occurrence became more apparent, I was led to study it more deeply and write upon it at greater length." Further, "My own special attention was directed to the subject from the blunders which I found my chemical pupils make in reference to the colours of

¹ "Researches on Colour-Blindness," by Dr. George Wilson, M.D., F.R.S.E., Regius Professor of Technology in the University of Edinburgh, and Director of the Museum of Scotland.



A CORNER OF THE BACK DRAWING-ROOM
Pergolesi Commode with Panels painted by Angelica Kaufmann, R.A.



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compounds. After making every allowance for imperfect exposition on my part, and insufficient attention on the part of my students, and after making a large deduction from inaccurate answers, on the score of imperfect remembrance, and inability to name colours, I still found, both in the laboratory and lecture-room, that many a pupil was puzzled to describe the changes which occur when an acid or an alkali acts upon the vegetable colouring matter, though to a normal eye the changes are of the most marked character; and that in general I could count with little confidence upon accurate answers regarding the colours of bodies." Dr. Wilson's investigations led him to classify colour-blindness of three kinds: first, inability to discern any colour, properly so-called, so that black and white, *i.e.* light and shade, are the only variations of tints perceived. Second, inability to discriminate between the nicer shades of the more composite colours, such as brown, grey, and neutral tints. Third, inability to distinguish between the primary colours, red, blue, and yellow, or between these and the secondary and tertiary colours, such as green, purple, orange, and brown. Dr. Wilson says that "the second variety of colour-blindness, where the nicer shades of the more composite colours alone are mistaken, is *apparently* the rule rather than the exception in the majority of persons, at least of the male sex, in this country." Even if the space prescribed for this digressive reference permitted a quotation of curious cases these are so various as to preclude convenient citation of types. Amongst painters, engravers, dyers, mercers, haberdashers, and tailors, Dr. Wilson met with colour-blindness of the most marked description. "When," he remarks, "we find an engraver, who, for the greater part of his life has been gazing all day at paintings, purchasing a red window-curtain for a green one; a tailor whose eye has been for hours daily fixed on clothes of very varied colours, matching green tape with scarlet linen, at the risk of losing his situation; an experienced field-geologist compelled, when surveying a red sandstone district, to take a companion with him

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to point out where the grass ends and sandstone begins; and a teacher of chemistry evading, as much as possible, the questions of his pupils concerning the colours of bodies; we cannot doubt that after education has done all it can towards developing the sense of colour in the colour-blind, they remain as helplessly prone to make their characteristic blunders as before." Are there any colour-blind men and women (there is less colour-blindness amongst females than there is amongst males Dr. Wilson says) making their characteristic blunders as art-critics? The case of the three separate views of the picture by Dagnan-Bouveret shows, at least, that three critics of some importance did not see eye to eye with each other when they gazed upon the jacket of the Breton peasant. Artists who note an irreconcilable difference of opinion on the part of the three hundred art-critics who annually judge at the Royal Academy with regard to the colouring of the more important of the works censured, may, one submits, be excused if in some wise they ascribe it to difference of vision. It has been suggested, by a painter of course, that the three hundred should pass an examination before entering upon their duties at Burlington House. The notion is humorous, but carried into effect by means of some such tests as Dr. Wilson applied to his own pupils, to the men of the 4th Infantry, the 7th Hussars, to the Artillery soldiers, Leith Fort, the Edinburgh Police, the students of the Edinburgh Veterinary College, and the medical and other attendants of the Royal Asylum, Morningside, it might produce curious results.¹

Inasmuch as art criticism published in journals that are read by the buyers of pictures affects the sale of the painter's work, it

¹ Some interesting results have been yielded by an extensive investigation into the prevalence of colour-blindness on German railways. The inquiry, which has lasted several years—the latest data having been obtained on July 1, 1886—was extended to seventy-nine railways. Of 104,743 persons tested from April 1, 1882, to July 1, 1886, 850, or 0.81 per cent., were found to be colour-blind. Of 239,726 persons tested up to July of last year, 1934, or 0.81 per cent., were colour-blind, while of 145,456 officials and other servants employed on the seventy-nine railways on July 1, 1886, 100 were entirely and 441 partially colour-blind, a percentage of 0.37. The methods

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is only natural for him to complain when he feels that he has been passed over in silence, damned with faint praise, or unfairly or cruelly condemned. This is a sordid, a commercial, a shoppy view to take of his art, but he can scarcely avoid taking it so long as glory and gain go together, and the goods in the galleries suffer in public esteem for lack of honest advertisement. The art-critic who is allowed a free hand on a powerful journal is armed with a grave responsibility. Mr. W. P. Frith and Mr. T. Sidney Cooper have dwelt on this point, expressing, each in his characteristic manner, a common yet weighty opinion. It cannot, alas! be said that fairness always features the reports of the critics. When, for example, a painter of deserved distinction, and in the plenitude of his powers, is persistently boycotted by this or that journal, small wonder if the justice of the reporter be called in question. "Have you seen that fine notice of your picture in the —?" asked one artist of another. "You surprise me," was the reply. "Then So-and-so" (mentioning the name of the regular art-critic) "must be out of town." The surmise was correct. The gentleman mentioned was taking a holiday. It goes without saying that there are schools of critics as well as schools of painters. Woe betide the old order of painters when a death, or a dismissal, or "a change of ministry" in the editor's room admits the new broom!

of testing were chiefly the Stilling method (by means of colour plates) and the Holmgren method (by means of coloured woollen threads); but the Daae, Cohn, Schmidt, and Rimpler methods were also adopted. In 16,201 cases the test was repeated, and 305 times did the results differ from former results. The officials of German railways who are colour-blind have been given duties in the discharge of which their incapacity can have no ill result, so that there is no danger in their continued employment.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

CHAPTER XVI

Mr. Orrock and his critics—Variegated praise—"English, at all events"—The spirit of De Wint, David Cox, and Constable—A verse by Gerald Massey—Letter from an art-critic—"The fine old shameful dishonesty of ignorance"—Mr. Facing-both-Ways—P. G. Hamerton's criticism—A cocksure contrast—A dithyrambic art-critic—His outbursts—Art criticism as "a society function"—The Bohemian art-critic—H. S. Marks, R.A., and George Augustus Sala—"The Harbour of Refuge"—The lady journalist—Gems of prophecy and eloquence—New phrases—A champion of Mr. Whistler on fools of art-critics—Mr. George Moore as an immortal—His vivisection of Lord Leighton—Wanted, a portrait—Lord Russell of Killowen on the Royal Academy—Comments.

MR. ORROCK has scant reason to complain of the treatment of his works by the art-critics. On the contrary, they as a body have shown a true appreciation, as well as a cordial approval, of his art from his somewhat remote day of small things until the season of full accomplishment. There have been exceptions, it is true, but nothing of consequence, nothing, in fact, to make a discordant note apparent in a chorus of discriminative praise. With one of the cavillers it will be necessary to deal, but only in the gentlest Izaak Walton manner.¹ If the remarkable departure made by the critic in question, who is a conspicuous member of his fraternity, did not constitute an essential feature in the account of Mr. Orrock's association, through his exhibited pictures, with the reporters and interpreters in the press for the enlightenment of the public, it would not even be mentioned. However, the case will come more appropriately in a succeeding page. Almost every kind of tribute in phrase and epithet that a critic, conventional or not,

¹ "Thus use your frog; put your hook, I mean the arming wire, through his mouth, and out at his gills, and then with a fine needle and silk sew the upper part of his leg with only one stitch in the arming wire of your hook, or tie the frog's leg above the upper joint of the armed wire; and in so doing use him as though you loved him."

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can plausibly bestow on an English landscape-painter has been employed concerning Mr. Orrock and his work. One critic goes so far as to declare him "the first of painters in landscape," a place the painter would be the first to deny his right to occupy; another, speaking of one of his pictures, says, "The painting of air is wonderful, the breadth of the colour and light is majestic, and the cumuli slowly drifting across the view are tremendously grand." This is an eagle's flight. We descend to earth again and breathe with restored ease in the company of the critic who found one of Mr. Orrock's drawings "pretty, sweet in tone, and suggestive of repose." However, the two gentlemen were not discussing the same picture. The artist has been called "mannered but breezy," it has been said that his subjects were "finely handled according to the best traditions of David Cox," and he has been dismissed by a commentator, whose space was evidently limited, with the remark that his drawings in a certain exhibition were "in his popular 'De Winty' style." The association of the artist's with the names of the two masters he admires and emulates, even the "De Winty" may be forgiven. To paint in their manner, and with their spirit, is to be with them both in spirit and in truth, and that is where Mr. Orrock would desire to stand. It is due to the critics who have examined and written of Mr. Orrock's work from year to year to say that they have not, in their observations on "manner," ascribed to him a merely stereotyped capacity to perform certain feats of draughtsmanship and those only. Nobody, for example, has said of him anything like what was said of another member of the English school, whose fine picture in one of the exhibitions was flatteringly dismissed with the remark that "Mr. So-and-so is always successful in painting the quaint movements of geese." Neither the witlings nor the feeble cynics have let him alone. 'Twas ever thus with them in the presence of such a mark as a successful man affords. One of them introduces his review of the pictures he has noted with a reference to Mr. Orrock as the painter "who has lately

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been going into hysterics over the national neglect of his favourite art." Whatever else Mr. Orrock may be, he is certainly not hysterical. To say this of a man so shrewd and logical, and withal so pregnant with humour, shows how destitute the writer, who was not operating in a comic journal, must have been of common discernment. In all the controversies in which Mr. Orrock has been engaged, the hysteria, if any, was displayed by his opponents. It pleased a painfully smart writer, who felt that there was a chance of making a point, to refer to Mr. Orrock's former profession. He was, said the laugh-maker, an excellent judge of a tooth. No doubt Stanfield and Chambers, who were sailors before they were painters, were excellent judges of knotting and splicing. There were no art-critics plying their vocation in Claude's days to compliment him on his knowledge of the art and practice of manufacturing pastry. To meet the witling on his own ground, and employ a vulgar figure of speech with the true inwardness of which he is doubtless familiar, be it said that his missile was not only a chestnut, but one impaired in the handling. And how hackneyed its employment! Keats was adjured by his reviewer to get to his gallipots.

"English at all events," says one of Mr. Orrock's critics, adding with regard to the painter that "he ranks as an art-critic as well as an artist." Read "connoisseur" for "art-critic," and the description, as far as it goes, is apt. Other leading critics have spoken of "the bold and steady hand of the painter," "the charm of vividness and direct impression" in his work, his "unerring touch and artistic insight," of its being "particularly fine in sunlight, distance, and atmospheric effect," "full of breadth and freshness," "one can almost feel the fresh breezes on the common in Mr. James Orrock's Essex scene," and so forth. It is a common practice with art-critics, as well as with others who are agreed concerning the high merits of an author or painter, to take, if not contrary, modified views of his style. The general view of Mr. Orrock's work, a solidly established one, is that he

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has been fortunately influenced by his sympathy with and admiration for two of the great masters in (and "pillars of") English water-colour art. These are David Cox and De Wint. He is also (as he himself tersely expresses it) "a Constable man." It will not be denied, however, by any of the identifiers of manner, that he is also, strongly and individually, himself. One of the more thoughtful and observant of his critics said, in reference to certain of his contributions to one of the Piccadilly exhibitions: "The same general standpoint which, be it recorded, is in the main that of De Wint, David Cox, and Constable, is revealed in the broad and serious work of another of the shining lights of the Institute, Mr. James Orrock. His technique is in the main that of the great classical school of English water-colour, by which he is, indeed, rather too strongly influenced." It might be urged, if the question called for completer discussion, that there are drawings by Mr. Orrock, golden and silvery, with distances disappearing in illimitable air, that recall Turner more than either of the masters mentioned. And it is evident that he has mastered the heart of the mystery of method and manner in the works of other painters of the great English school while fulfilling his own separate task. The style is the man, said one of Mr. Orrock's critics, who also found the man in voice and speech as well as in the performances of his pencil. Here is a tribute, an all-round acknowledgment of characteristics and powers that will commend itself for its broad truth to everybody who is familiar with the painter and his art. "We come with pleasure to Mr. James Orrock, painter and lecturer. His oratory is something like his painting, for in both we find the qualities of strength, openness, breadth, and a happy knack of that decision which means having something to say and saying it clearly and well. 'A Common in Essex' and 'A Breezy Day' on the same spot are fine examples of his masterful method, and both in speech and the strongly woven paper he likes to paint on, Mr. Orrock is in the best sense of the word a man of power." And is he not, according

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to another of his critics, "one of those artists who, like good wine, mellow with age"? Mr. Orrock never had his attendant poet as Jervas had in Pope, or as Romney had in the laudatory and ever-grasping Hayley, but he has not lacked poetic appreciation of his freshly beautiful pictures of English landscape. Gerald Massey wrote of "A Gleam of Red in a picture by James Orrock":—

"A tender, sweet auroral flush
Springs in its face for Love's caress,
As if it were the conscious blush
Of Nature's unveiled loveliness."

An art-critic of high individual distinction who occupies a position of irresponsible responsibility on a leading journal wrote to Mr. Orrock as follows:—

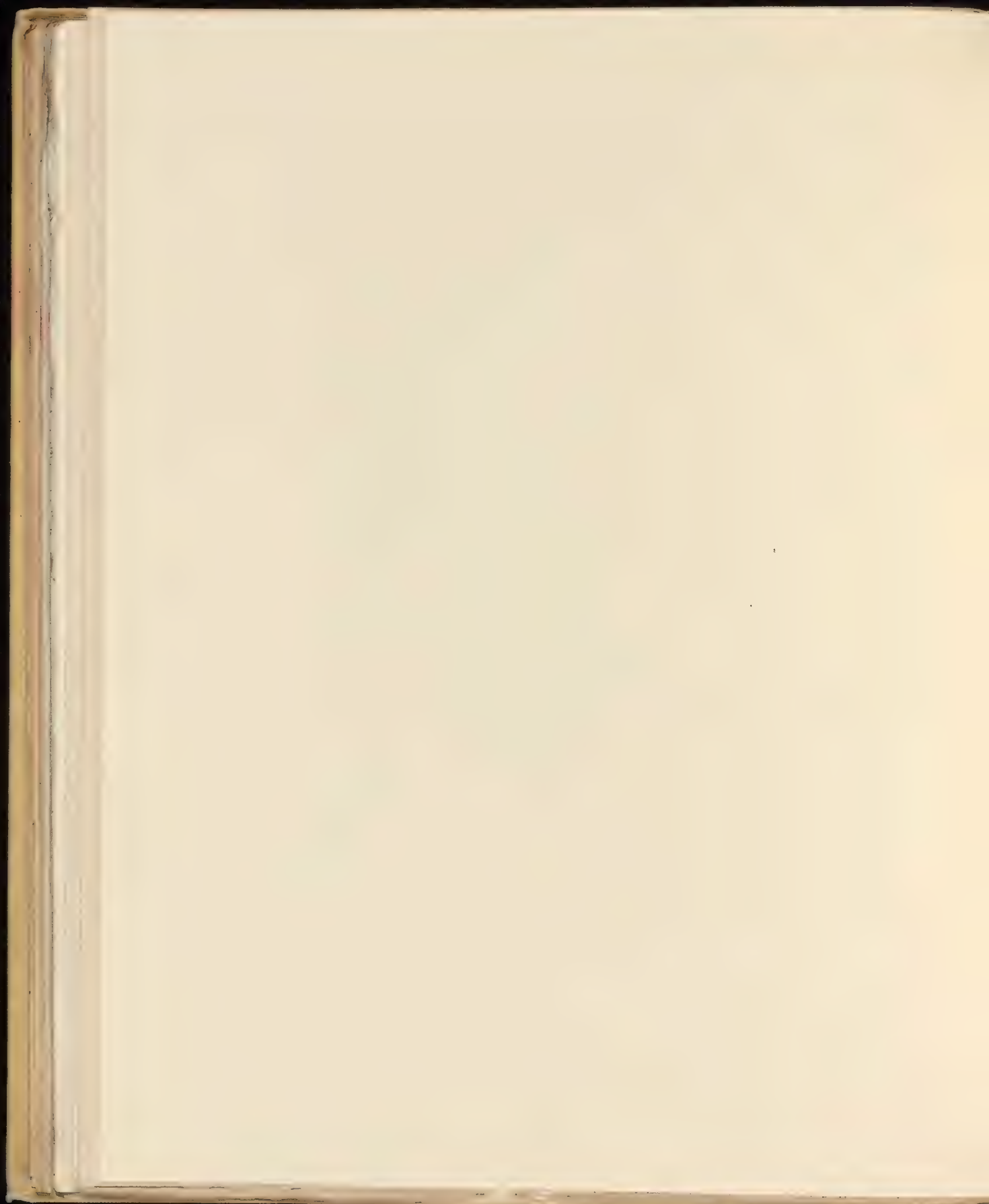
"Thank you very much for the lecture, much of which I have already read with interest. As to your main object of course you are heartily right, and that object will be brought to pass largely by your means.

"I read the — on British water-colour drawing with real bewilderment. Such stuff was, as far as I know, never published, even in fine-art 'criticism,' until now. Its folly is absolutely incredible, and I rubbed my eyes while reading it.

"The fine old shameful dishonesty of ignorance which formerly characterised 'fine-art criticism' is rampant here. I remember that when the editor of a morning paper was wont to encourage the zealous penny-a-liner who brought him early news of a fire, by giving him the private-view tickets for the Academy and the Old Water-Colour, with 'Here's a ticket for some picture shows; give us a nice smart article on them!' I had to review one of the portrait exhibitions at South Kensington, and met there a friend on the same errand; he was honest enough to be much exercised by his complete ignorance of the subject, and I found that he did



ADAM CABINET IN BACK DRAWING-ROOM



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not know Walpole's 'Painting.' When I recommended him to read this book as a handy compendium, he actually supposed I meant Walpole's 'Letters.' Yours very truly, —."

The recommendation of a perusal of Walpole's "Anecdotes of Painters" was excellent, albeit one conceives the possibility of a critic's making a success of the performance of such a task as that which is named without having recourse to the writings of the pompous virtuoso. It is to be hoped that the right edition of Walpole was mentioned. In a footnote in John Thomas Smith's "Nollekens and his Times," that particularly careful biographer says, with reference to the Rev. James Dallaway, "This gentleman has just completed a new edition of Walpole's 'Anecdotes of Painters,' in which, I trust, there are not only many of Lord Orford's errors corrected, but new information given of English artists, of whom his Lordship appeared ignorant." But this is a trifling matter. Walpole or no Walpole, the outcry of Mr. Orrock's accomplished and, in art, authoritative correspondent against "the fine, old, shameful dishonesty of ignorance which formerly characterised 'fine-art criticism,'" and "is rampant here," was that of one who knew the ropes. Mr. Orrock has himself sustained, without, however, suffering seriously from it, an attack the dishonesty of which—whether "fine," or "old," or "shameful," or "ignorant"—could scarcely be questioned. Under a well-known hand in an established periodical there appeared a notice of one of Mr. Orrock's drawings in which the reviewer contemned the artist's "dirty olives and wooden cows." Lord Palmerston's definition of dirt is not unknown. Well, the dirt was undeniable; but, it was not in Mr. Orrock's "olives." By the very same critic in previous numbers of the same periodical Mr. Orrock's "broad and artistic" treatment, his "well-practised hand," his "luminous and rich" and his "cleverly put together" landscape "in a Constable-like way" had been dealt with. On the one side there were scores of flattering reviews of the artist's work, on the other the "dirty

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olives" and "wooden cows"! Had anything happened? Let shrewd conjecture supply the answer.

They have ever been with us, those vexed controversies and bitter bickerings in the world of art, and with regard to many of them who is to decide? In his "Analysis and Synthesis in Painting," P. G. Hamerton relates that "when Mrs. Beecher Stowe visited England, she found, to her great perplexity, that artists and critics could no more agree about art than mankind generally can about religion." He adds that, "To a thoughtful and sincere woman, anxious to find out what she ought to believe about everything in which she felt an interest, the discovery of the diversity in art doctrine which exists in Europe must have been quite painful." Hamerton himself was one of the honestest and most candid of critics, while being one of the most capable. It is seldom one meets with a member of his order who pleads limited knowledge of his subject as he pleaded. He says in one of his painstaking disquisitions, "I have no pretensions, as yet, to a really critical knowledge of the figure, which is only to be acquired by long study of the Living Anatomy of Movement. For example, I consider that no critic can be really competent to speak with authority about the figure, who has not pursued in reference to the motions of the whole of the body, studies fully as accurate and painstaking as those of Sir Charles Bell on the anatomy of expression." Again, "The reader is therefore requested for the present to accept any passing remarks I may make on this subject as suggestions to direct his attention to particular points, not by any means as authoritative teaching." Contrast the tone of that with the cocksureness of the prediction that "the German from Bushey," would be made P.R.A., the declaration that a work by a Scottish painter who has yet to arrive, "we have reason to believe, is the finest Highland picture ever painted," and the unhesitating glorification of another artist as "the finest sea-painter in Europe."

It was said by one of Sir John Millais' critics that a landscape

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by the painter was "a budget of natural statistics." This was no doubt meant to be scathingly severe, but if Millais saw the statement he peradventure felt that it was true, as far as it went, and that it cast no discredit on the work. There are criticisms of pictures that are catalogues of facts, and, in respect of their painstaking qualities as reports, valuable. On the other hand—widely on the other hand—we meet now and then with the dithyrambic critic who, soaring above the level of sober prose, reels out his descriptions in muffled or accentuated, lumbering or lopsided metre. The oft-quoted character in Molière's comedy had been speaking prose all his life without knowing it. Whether or not the chief of the dithyrambic order of critics is aware of his possession of the gift of pouring forth blank verse is left to conjecture. Let us cull a few examples:—

"A fierce November gale is sweeping o'er a waste
Traversed by a deep and sandy road
Whereon the traveller and his dark-brown hack
Are struggling, and whirls away
The last brown leaves from the branches,
And bends the stems of the birches of a wood
Towards which the road ascends."

There are but two alterations from the original in the foregoing fragment, and one of them is the omission of an insignificant word.

"Nothing could be truer than his stride
Quick and determined, as, almost leaning
(So to say) against the wind,
He advances step by step."

Two words are transposed and a conjunction added in the above.

"He is bareheaded, and the countenance
Is bright yet serious. Against his shoulder
Leans a huge banner whose grand folds form
Right noble drapery."

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A word omitted, another substituted, and one added represent the work of the present admiring gatherer. But the original is all there in substance and rhythmical form. Now for a grander note—one that Sheridan Knowles or Bulwer-Lytton might have struck and been proud of—

"Vesuvius with its slowly-drifting plume
Of smoke, a line of highlands like the Alban hills,
A Claudian sky restful and full of colour,
And, as of Paradise, serene."

With the exception of an omitted "and," the foregoing description of a picture is the art-critic's own.

"Pure sunny daylight, the sea of freshest pale green
Hurrying to the blanched sands of a Cornish bay,
Bounded afar by dark and verdurous cliffs."

The foregoing passage is not, of course, a perfect piece of blank verse. But it has, in spite of two longish lines—the first two—quite a Turneresque swing. To project it into the shape it takes, all that was necessary was the omission of a redundant word or two, and the substitution of “afar” for “distance.” The sense is nowhere wounded or distorted in the slightest particular. The following, it will be admitted, is a sort of verse ready-made :—

"She lolls against the angle of a wall
Behind the group, shadow-projecting cirri
Flushed with golden hues."

In the ensuing illustration the lines, it is submitted, come out, still more than a fragment already treated, like a passage in Sheridan Knowles's "William Tell." But that the inspiration which is supposed to stir the hero of that play was alpine and not oceanic, the passage might have been written in the strain of "Climbing yonder peak." A slight modification of the original

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statement and the dropping of certain words were requisite before the verses shook themselves from their prosaic envelope and emerged thus:—

“The yeasty surges’ fury battering grey granite cliffs
In misty weather, while the air is charged
With brine and foam.”

Here is a specimen that is not far from being verse in prose-form. It is merely transposed:—

“In the shadows of tall cypress trees
The figures linger, while from land and sea
The daylight fades.”

Art criticism, treated as a “society function,” or an account of a society “function” flavoured with the lightest and most frivolous kind of survey of the pictures, and varied by an occasional glance at the frames, may be frequently met with in smart newspapers. The poor painter as a rule plays a secondary part in such light exercises. Occasionally the performer limps into rhyme. For instance—

“Did the picture exhibitions, all exceptionally crowded,
For the novelty of sunshine drew no end of people out,
’Twas as though they feared the skies would in a little time be clouded,
So uncomfortably eager was the way they pushed about.
At the gallery of Sacred Art, a splendid exhibition
Of the celebrated pictures of our Edwin Long, R.A.;
While at Tooth & Sons, Haymarket, they are running (in addition
To the lions of Rosa Bonheur) an enjoyable display
Of the works of foreign artists—here and there a humble British!
At Tom Wallis’s French Gallery a show of brilliant greens,
Here and there relieved by pictures, which I’ll designate as ‘skittish’;
Crowned the afternoon’s enjoyment by a visit to M’Lean’s.”

“Did” indeed! The familiarity of the poet’s touch will not escape notice, neither will his manifest incapacity to make the “Rosa Bonheur” line scan. The art-critic who “does” the dresses of the visitors to the gallery as well as the pictures themselves, is another

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modern institution. Here is a taste of the operator's quality: "Dress was for the most part sombre and wintry, the day being dull and cheerless. Serge and cloth gowns, many of them edged with fur, heavy capes and mantles with deep collars, pleated at the shoulders, and here and there a Russian blouse, were the characteristics of the costumes. Touches of red velvet, or bows of tartan silk in the hats and sleeves, vests and sashes of bright silk were the only notes of vivid colour *outside the picture frames.*" A skilful mixer of "poetic honey with trade wax" would have given the names and addresses of the artists who had fashioned the raiment, and so made perfect this essay in a well-known description of "art criticism."

The enthusiasm for *his* art which impelled Mr. Crummles's tragedian to black himself all over to play Othello is sometimes rivalled by the art-critic, who as it were goes behind the scenes, and is glad in the seamy pursuit of his vocation. He rejoices greatly in his knowledge of the Art and the artists and the Bohemia of it all inside out. Writes one of these enthusiasts: "Although the frontiers of Palette-land are as difficult to define as those of social Bohemia, extending as they do from Hampstead Heights to Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, yet the ground of galleries has its limits as well marked as if Academy students made it an annual custom to beat the bounds! Pall Mall and Piccadilly, the Haymarket, and Bond Street, are the cheery hunting grounds of picture-seekers, and dotted here and there are pleasant resorts that tempt one to forget, for a brief space, the mire and misery of our muddy streets." The mint-mark of this writer's coinage is readily identified. When we meet with "galleries are gregarious," and a picture described as a "powerful prose pictile poem," we feel at once that the remark of Nathan unto David applies to the writer.

"I had one year at the Academy," writes Mr. H. S. Marks, R.A., in his "Recollections,"¹ "a little picture of two Puritan sweethearts

¹ "Pen and Pencil Sketches," 2 vols., Chatto & Windus.

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discoursing by a riverside gate, to which I appended as title the well-known lines, as I fancied, from Shakespeare—

‘Journeys end in lovers’ meetings,
Every wise man’s son doth know.’

Judge how surprised I was during the month of May to read an article in an influential morning paper in which the writer, while briefly referring to the picture, reserved his strictures for the quotation, as thus: ‘We earnestly hope that this quotation, with which we candidly confess our unfamiliarity, is not by any famous poet, since, logically considered, it is little less than idiotic. Journeys do not necessarily end in the meeting of lovers, nor is “every wise man’s son” qualified to pronounce an opinion on that or upon any other subject, seeing that the majority of wise men’s sons, from the time of Rehoboam downwards, have been fools.’

“Here was a chance too good to be missed by other journals, and on the following day one replied: ‘Perhaps the quotation is little less than idiotic. Only it happens to be by William Shakespeare, late of Stratford-on-Avon, who wrote an obscure play called *Twelfth Night*, in which (Act ii. scene 3) it is to be found.’

“Imagine the glee with which critic No. 2 must have chuckled as he penned this paragraph on the slip made by critic No. 1, feeling he ‘had him on toast’! It is not entirely displeasing to a painter to see the critics fall foul of each other.”

No doubt. And, on the part of the painter, the feeling is natural. The name of the critic, and he was one of considerable note and influence, who was so ignorant, and so forgetful,—for it never pays to be satirical at the expense of an author unless you know,—was George Augustus Sala. It was one of Marks’s whims, enjoyed to the end of his life, to collect what he called “Curiosities of Art Criticism.” He would read them aloud over a pipe in his studio with a humorous enjoyment in the perusal that was shared by his congenial auditors. He especially delighted in the contradictions of the critics themselves. He might have quoted many a choice

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example when he wrote "Pen and Pencil Sketches," but he was content with citing one, that which has been given, because it was personal to himself. Here, however, are two gems from his "Cabinet of Curiosities," over which he especially chuckled:—

"A London paper of yesterday, in its articles upon the Leighton and Watts pictures, gaily introduces its readers to a number of

'names and men
Which never were, nor no man ever saw.'

To describe Lord Leighton's picture of Cimabue finding Giotto at work on his sketches, in the fields near Florence, as the 'Discovery of Grotto,' is somewhat misleading, and it is difficult to recognise in 'Icaro' the over-ambitious son of Dædalus. 'Daphephoria,' again, is a quaint reading of the title of a very well-known canvas, while 'Montegna,' the old master referred to in the Watts criticism, is new to us. Dante surely never wrote of Paola and 'Narcesca,' and to the student of Spenser the name of 'Butemart' is unknown. It is scarcely fair either to cite the pictures, Nos. 3 and 11, as examples of the alleged inability of Mr. Watts to paint children, for No. 3 is 'The Wounded Heron,' and No. 11 a portrait of Mrs. Nassau Senior."

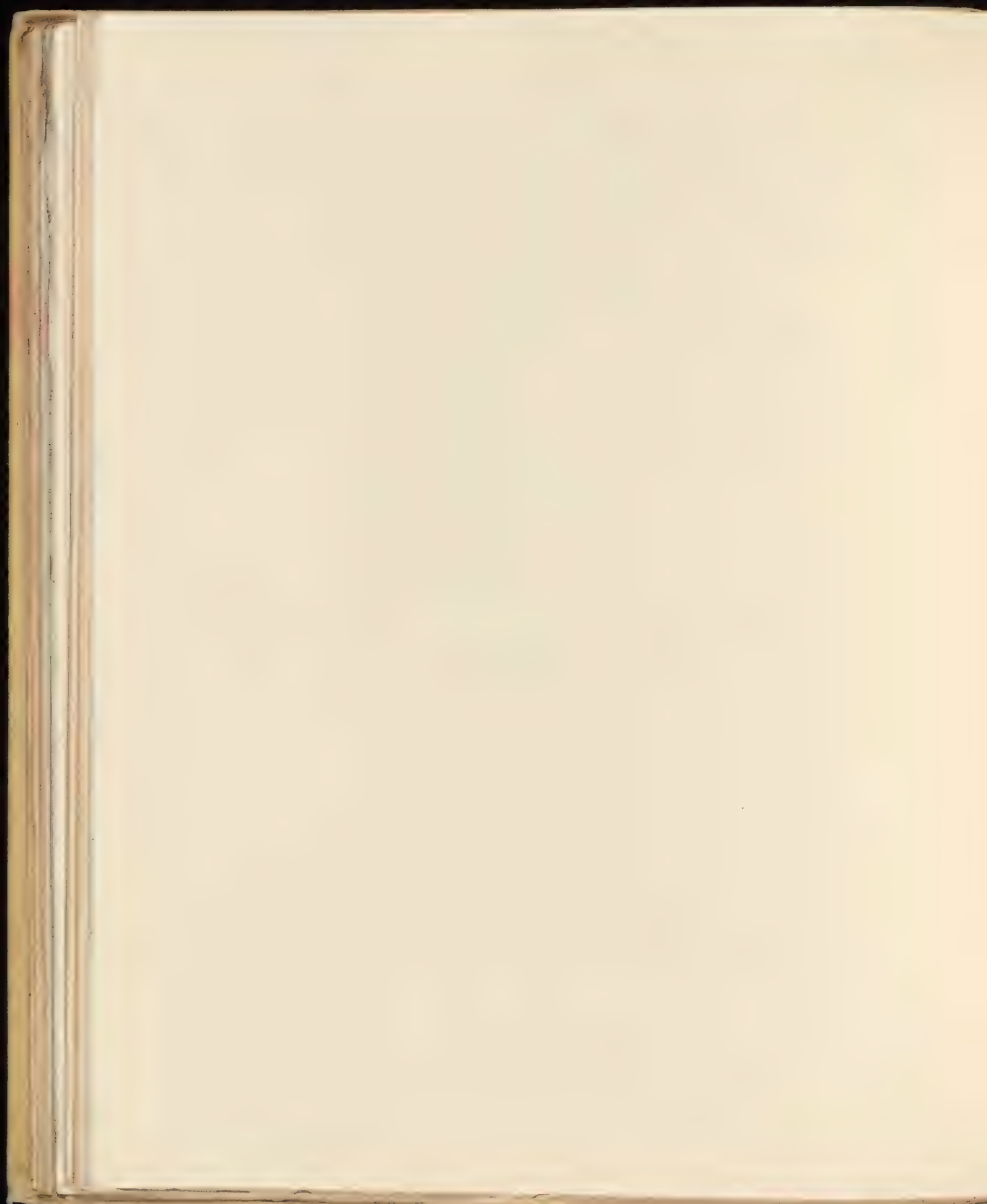
"I need not ask you, my benighted brethren," ran Marks's accustomed introduction to the next Opinion of the Press, "whether you ever beheld Fred Walker's 'Harbour of Refuge?' You have. Then, hearken to the words of a critic of that well-known work. They appeared in the *Whitehall Review* on the 22nd of May, 1884, and are as follow:—

"We were chiefly struck with the natural colouring of G. A. Fripp's 'Loch Ayr'; H. Roberts's 'Dinner Time,' a clever study of a herd-boy eating a raw turnip; Mrs. Angell's small picture of cut fruit; a good sea piece, 'The Harbour of Refuge,' by F. Walker; a very attractive picture by E. Lundgren, entitled 'Chorister Boys.'"

It may be just as well to state, for the information of those



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persons who never saw either the picture, the finished sketch, or the etching, that "The Harbour of Refuge" is a representation of an almshouse, in the swarded quadrangle of which a mower plies his scythe. An aged woman, an inmate of the "Harbour," her feeble steps supported by a young girl, is walking abroad to enjoy the warmth and beauty of the afternoon sun.

An article by a prominent writer on art, entitled "Art Criticism as She is Wrote," opens with these observations: "The artists are always complaining of the way their work is criticised by the press. It cannot be said that they cry out without cause. In America they allege that the pictures and the fires are done by the same man, and in England by the police-court reporter. This, of course, is epigrammatic and untrue. Our leading journals provide us with specimens of very worthy and also of very contemptible criticism. It is, unfortunately, undeniable that in all but the first-class organs the pictures are often confided to graduating school-girls. From lady-typewriter to art-critic is but a step. They are the neighbour rungs of the lady-journalist's ladder. As we write we have in our mind's eye the fury of one of our oldest Academicians when last he walked through Burlington House on Press Day. 'For thirty years,' he exclaimed, 'I have given all my life, all my thought and power, to art, that critics in pinafores may write against my work with all the experience of twenty—Defective in drawing, Philistine in feeling, crude in colour. *Pas chic!*'" The same writer could, on his own individual account, be terribly severe when his brethren of the critical pen had to be punished for their transgressions. "When," he wrote, "Macaulay so savagely attacked Montgomery, he prefaced his cruelty by an anecdote of the Hindu who, going to sacrifice, was persuaded by a consensus of knavish voices to purchase a mangy dog as a fat sheep. It is not that we wish to imply that some of our lesser [*sic*] critics are knaves. That is not exactly what they are. But a consensus of their voices sometimes imposes a mangy dog on the public as a fat sheep; nay, more, sells the cur under the false description. Thus not

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only is the public taste debased, but good gold diverted from the pocket of the struggling painter who should be aided to that of the daubster or daubstress, who had better be driven to macadamising roads or taking in mangling."

It pleased a temerarious art-critic, who had taken the painter under *his* wing, to say that Mr. Swan, "the animalier," was "probably the greatest living artist in or out of the Academy." At another time he said, "I have heard the Academy described as 'an exhibition of Swan's "Prodigal Son" and other pictures.'" The critic who wrote, "So loudly and boisterously rage the winds in Mr. Edwin Ellis's strong seascapes of blue, white, dark brown, and green, they almost seem to blow the paint off the canvas," might have felt himself bankrupt in language if he had presently had a more tempestuous seascape by a greater man (say Turner) to rhapsodise over. But, Lord! as Samuel Pepys might have said, it is all mighty fine. So, in a different vein, is this:—"A lividly beautiful woman, with great coils of rich red hair, garbed in gorgeous green, heroic in her proportions, stands out against an intense blue background, and lifts to her head with both nobly moulded arms the heavy coronet of Royal Caledonia." In other words, the plain words of the catalogue, a portrait of Miss Ellen Terry as Lady Macbeth.

Quite with Mr. Asquith in his suggestion "that it was a sure sign of the degradation of critic, as such, when he lapsed into the habitual use of catchwords and formulæ," one notes with enjoyment the criticisms of a breezily independent writer on art who discharges such piquantly original phrases as these:—

"A great captivating swobble of brush-strokes and sparkling colour"; "effectively wraps himself in Peppercornian grandeur"; "traded by his decorative flatness"; "Does he never step out of this discreet brown-paper envelope, and, like Mr. Peppercorn, enjoy the savage violences of real nature?" "Does he never lose his head and his cloak of sombre sadness, and, in the spring at least, dance mentally naked in air, in light, in space?" "The picture

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looks like a skinned Millet in general conception"; "The colour is depressing, the greens greasy"; "He thinks in paint, he babbles in brushwork"; "full of licence that might enliven an after-dinner audience"; "and its general colour passes through every line and variety of mildew."

The same writer's cut-and-slash method is equally refreshing, as, for example, "The usual mass of rubbish which accumulates at this season on the walls of the Suffolk Street Gallery," and "Another dismal show of the Royal Institute is open to the public." But he is more welcomely entertaining when he substitutes for such sweeping generalisations as these a ruthless tearing-to-pieces of the unhappy painter's work.

The ardour of the champions of a New Artist whose originality partakes of heresy is apt to make them fiery zealots rather than composed critics. Instead of reasoning with the purblind unbeliever they anathematise him. Not that they are all of them concerned to make converts. There are critics who manifestly regard the god of their noisy worship as their private property. Even when the idol has, for his good, to be beaten with admonitory stripes, they and they only must perform the operation. "Mr. Whistler," writes an authority on that famous artist, his works and his smart opinions, "as we know, has reserved the keenest shafts of his raillery for the critics. The right of criticism, he has told us many times, lies with the imaginative artist alone. The others should be silent and abashed before the masterpiece." An eminent critic,¹ who belongs of course to Mr. Whistler's severely restricted class of critics, those who possess exclusively the right to speak, has dealt with certain members of his order in a fashion that would do honour to the master himself:—"It was only last week that I said there were few critics of art in this country who deserved the name. Gentlemen, who hastened to show that they did not deserve it, rushed forth in their organs and demonstrated the fact,

¹ "A. U.," in the *Star*.

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and some of them went so far as to send me anonymous letters—for which, my compliments. I am always wrong. Sometimes I am so vain as to think that I am right, that I have some following, that I have produced some effect. Of course, I and other of my fellows have restrained the fiery recklessness of people like the critic of the *Standard*. For is it not on record in black and white that this critic has said of some of Mr. Whistler's works, 'They have a merit of their own, and I do not wish to understand it'? What availeth him then that he shall now say of the 'Valparaiso,' 'One is always glad to see it'? for, according to his own confession, he cannot understand it. And as for the *Times*, the sad fates of Tom and of 'Arry have so chastened 'Umphrey that he makes no comment at all, and is content with the adjective exquisite. Exquisite, indeed! As for many of the other old ladies and gentlemen, they are quite speechless. They sigh, and they simper, and they pass on. They hesitate to say anything, knowing that if they write a line Nemesis will again overtake them. But in these last days has arisen a new race that knows not the fate of its forefathers, and it rushes in, and struggles, and sloshes around, and rattles the dry bones. Yet I admire this race. It is honest, it says what it thinks, and not what it is told. It knows nothing about art, and it knows therefore what it likes." Extracts from various London and country journals follow with running comments on the same, and finally—"This represents, then, the real critical standard of this country to-day. What does it matter to such people that Mr. Whistler has triumphed, that he has been accepted? What do they know of it? Naked, unabashed, and unashamed, they flaunt their ignorance in their papers, and their editors and readers have not the sense to see what fools they are."

The quarrel, as it stands, is not pretty. The verbal fence of an assailant who disdains not to speak of Mr. Humphry Ward, an art-critic of the highest distinction, as "'Umphrey," will be correctly judged. And, the brazen point of it all?

James Orrock

Every art-critic who disagrees with me, or who has disagreed with me, on the subject of Mr. Whistler's works, is a fool! The acumen and good taste of the diatribe are revealed by its recital:—

“Mild light, and by degrees, should be the plan
To cure the dark and erring mind:
But who would rush at a benighted man,
And give him two black eyes for being blind?”

Mr. George Moore, who speaks with authority on art, as he does on most things, may, as an oracle, be said to stand for the Hazlitt of the present day. He uses what has been happily described as a “pontifically personal style,” and “when he opes his mouth,” &c. On the occasion of his writing of “the itinerant Tate trundling his barrow of mock immortals from Kensington to Hampton Court back to Trafalgar Square,” he not only posed as a scathing satirist, but proclaimed his own immortality and assurance of being permitted to walk after the manner of Hamlet's ghost. It is evidently Mr. Moore's intention to revisit the glimpses of the moon in centuries to come as an awful warning to other Tates, unable, without his guidance, to distinguish the sham immortals from the real. Otherwise an appalling procession of Tates trundling barrows would stretch out to the crack of doom. The chronicles are not silent on the subject of artists who have been promised immortality by the Old Moores of the prophetic past. It is sad to reflect that, in many instances, the inspired prophet has, if the Americanism may be pardoned, “got left.” In other instances the name only of the chosen one has come down to posterity, without a vestige of proof that he deserved the adornment of the assigned nimbus. One of these, frequently cited, readily recurs. Dr. Plot, the historian of Oxfordshire, sang—or said—of Charles II.'s Serjeant Painter

“That future ages must confess they owe
To Streeter more than Michael Angelo.”

It is diffidently suggested that there may be a Streeter or two amongst Mr. George Moore's real immortals.

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Mr. George Moore is probably aware that no essay of his on Art, or on an English artist, attracted more attention than his paper on the late Lord Leighton in *Cosmopolis*.¹ His alacrity in making this mighty deliverance was not the least remarkable feature of the emprise. The illustrious President of the Royal Academy had been dead but a few weeks when the "Clear Reflection of an Artist's Soul"² was published. These amongst the opening notes of Mr. Moore's grandiose overture characterised the composer: "For it would seem that in no true sense can art be encouraged or repressed. Art comes we know not whence, it goes we know not whither; after slumbering for ages it leaps forth again like a volcano refreshed by long rest: it comes upon a nation like an epidemic, like a religion; comet-like, it flares suddenly into sight, and its visitations cannot be predicted." (As a matter of astronomical fact, Mr. Moore, the visitations of a comet can be predicted.) Volcanically refreshed if not fevered with an attack of the art epidemic, the writer reels off references to "the Chinese, the Persian, and the Roman Empire," "the states of Greece and Italy, with Japan," "the little plain of Holland," "the Greeks at Marathon and Thermopylæ," "the victories of Venice," "the discovery of America, the Reformation and the destruction of the Armada," philosophising and sparkling in the pungently epigrammatic manner which he affects, until at length, by a tremendously circuitous route, he reaches the Royal Academy. "As academies go, ours is of a nearly sufficient futility; it pursues popular shopkeeping in Piccadilly, and I think honestly." That admission made, Mr. Moore, done with magnanimity, presents a count of his indictment against this sufficiently futile institution and its late President: "The maladministration of the Chantrey Trust Fund is not the only charge of corruption than can be brought against the Academy; and that Lord Leighton does not seem to

¹ Vol. i. No. 3, March 1896 (T. Fisher Unwin).

² "I have not minced words in this article; I have said the worst that could be said, and yet I believe that there floats on these pages, as on his own canvases, the clear reflection of an artist's soul."—*Cosmopolis*, page 720.

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have exercised his influence to check the purchase of dishonourable pictures is the most easily appreciable blot on his career as President." Mr. George Moore's denunciation of Lord Leighton's paintings would be terrible if he did not now and then mercifully temper the sirocco to the shorn shudderer. When we read of "Flaming June," "surely it is not possible to imagine anything more unlike what a picture should be than this curled figure, flaming indeed, like the sign of a druggist's shop, seemingly a very low relief in orange soap," or "surely it would be impossible to select any portion of this picture for commendation," we murmur, Gently, sir, gently; as you are strong, pray be merciful. In a sentence that follows we find the lash withdrawn and the victim in the opinion of the scourger worthy of being spared further stripes. "Yet perforce we must admit that there is something in the picture which proclaims that the man who conceived the pose, or who observed it when the model accidentally fell asleep, was far removed from the ordinary Academician." Alas! for that ordinary Academician.

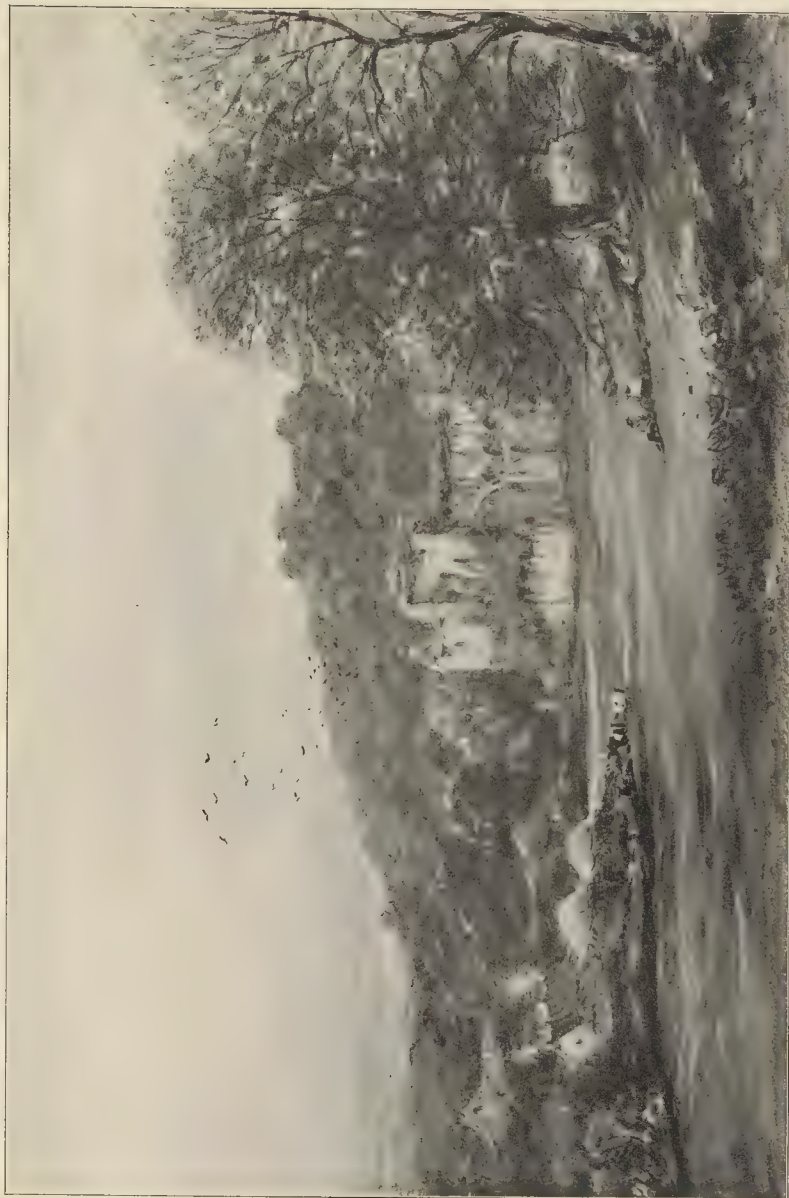
Mr. George Moore's method of presenting "a clear reflection of the artist's soul," while describing the artist's body and recounting the artist's accomplishments, habits, and habitation, is peculiarly his own. To wit: "The truth is, that nature had linked to a man always conscious of a great ideal, and always faithful to it, a very vulgar and claptrap showman, speaking all languages with the facility of a courier, and living in a shocking house in Kensington containing an Arab hall and a stuffed peacock. A man of somewhat excessive appearance, especially when he came down the High Street in his victoria, looking a Venus, an Aurora, a sort of damaged Guido Reni. His attitude in life was histrionic, somewhat vulgar, but to his credit it must be admitted that this side of his character he only once, so far as I can remember, allowed to definitely assert itself in his art: I am thinking now of the portrait he painted of himself for the celebrated Italian Gallery. In this portrait he appears in an almost shameful light, a sort of cross between a hairdresser and a toreador, and about

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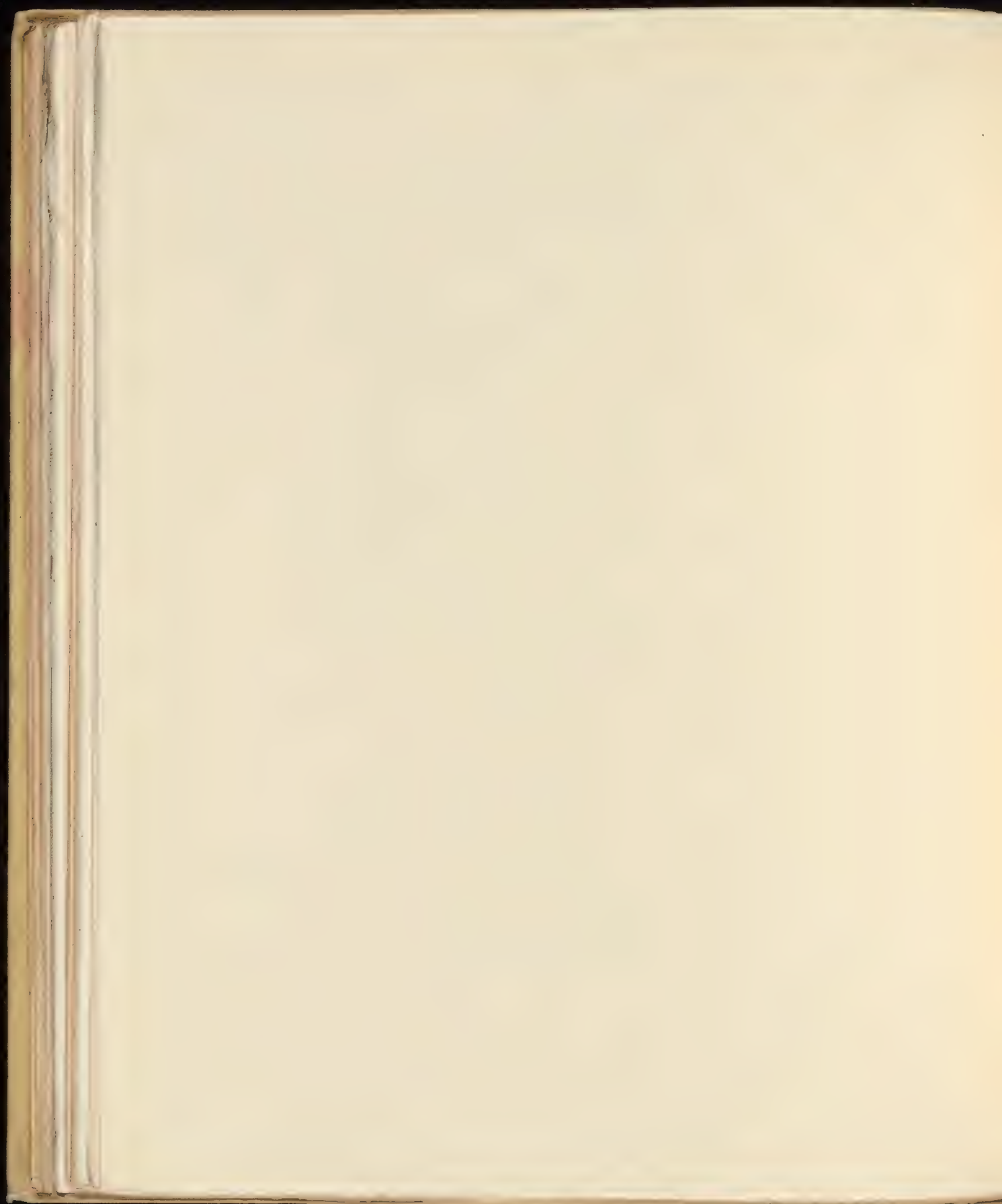
this frightful vision the glamour which he believed essential to the President of the Academy. In this portrait he is his own satirist, for in it he painted the portrait of the babbler of nothings in various languages, the ornate host receiving guests in the Arab hall, and the purchaser of the stuffed peacock; he omitted every faintest trace of the man who designed the Hesperides. And, oh, bitter derision, it is only the things depicted in this portrait that the world has chosen to honour him for. For I believe I am alone in my appreciation of the greater, the nobler Leighton, which we find reflected in the pictures; the man striving to reach a high ideal, and failing only on the threshold, even within sight of the altar."

Only the poet who described "stout Cortez when with eagle eyes he stared at the Pacific" could do justice to Mr. Moore in his lonely appreciation of "the greater, the nobler Leighton." On the subject of the portrait, representing "a cross between a hair-dresser and a toreador" and "a babbler of nothings," Mr. Moore has neither done himself nor his *Cosmopolis* justice. Elsewhere in his lonely appreciation he has shown how a picture by Leighton ought to have been painted. Mr. Moore's gifts of portrayal are, it is understood, not exclusively those of a writer. He is, like certain other scourgers of art and artists, a painter. It was clearly his duty to present the readers of *Cosmopolis* with a portrait of Mr. George Moore, painted by himself, thereby showing the world how such a work should be done. Failing that, it was open to him to publish a chromo-lithograph of Mr. Walter Sickert's portrait of Mr. George Moore, which was finally exhibited (probably by way of avenging Flodden) at Glasgow some years ago, so fulfilling, if only in a secondary degree, the like educational purpose. Or he might, in an unusual fit of self-abstraction, have made us rapturous by writing a critical essay on that imperishable work.

Mr. George Moore's gird at the popular shopkeeping of the Royal Academy in Piccadilly carries its futility with it. All Academies and Corporations of Art that hold exhibitions are



RIEVAULX ABBEY, YORKSHIRE. (WATER-COLOUR SKETCH.) 1873.



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shopkeepers, the Salon included. Mr. Whistler not only exhibits his works for the purpose of selling them, like so much cheese or bacon, but when he, in his view, has been wronged by a customer, he takes his case into a Law Court and (small blame to him) sues for his pound of flesh. Does Mr. George Moore himself decline, as Lord Byron declined, to take money for his writings, and give away his "royalties" or the price of his copyrights to needy friends?

Lord Russell of Killowen, in responding for the guests at the Royal Academy Banquet in 1899, and at the same time asking the company to honour the toast of "The Royal Academy of Arts," said: "The casual and uninformed observer who noticed the freedom of criticism, of fault-finding, and even of occasional abuse directed to the Royal Academy, might come naturally to the conclusion that the Royal Academy was a State Department, for it was one of their most cherished rights to abuse a State Department. That, however, was far from the truth; the Academy carried on a great work, from which the nation derived great benefit, and to which the resources of the nation made no contribution. Its work had been the voluntary and unpaid work of the artists of this country, and it had been the foundation of a great school of art which held a high place in the estimation of the world." Less than this Lord Russell could not have justly said. His pregnantly comprehensive testimony expressed no more than the truth. There is, however, at any time much more to be advanced in favour of the operations of the Royal Academy of Arts than clumsy fustigators like Mr. George Moore imagine. "The maladministration of the Chantrey Fund!" This is an Irish echo of a parrot screech. In the majority of instances the selection of pictures whose purchase is provided for by that Fund is denounced because the objector had other works in his ken, which, in his opinion, ought to have been preferred. For a high, if not for the loftiest, level of merit, and, withal, for its representation of the youthful vigour of the English School, the

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collection brought together by the Chantrey bequest is one, it is submitted, that would honourably emerge from the application of any fairly applied critical test. The Royal Academy Schools are an honour to the country. They are free. They mould and develop great artists, as the history of the Royal Academy itself reveals. The most illustrious of the later Presidents of the Royal Academy was in the beginning a Royal Academy student. The contributions made from the funds of the Royal Academy to relieve necessitous artists and their families, made, too, with no sort of publicity, amount annually to a large sum of money. And these benefactions are not restricted to a class. There are regrettable chapters in the record of the Royal Academy, as there are in the chronicles of most corporations. But they are fast merging into an ancient history that, in defiance of the proverb, appears impossible of repetition. It is inconceivable that a Müller, a Linnell, a Cox, or a Henry Dawson could be either treated as an outsider or locked out of the Fold of the Forty in our day. "Even the severest of the critics of the Royal Academy must be disarmed by the recent elections," was one of many recognitions of the present policy of the body which appeared in the press on the occasion of admitting new blood. Elections that followed met with the like reception. Certain of the elected would have been accounted heretics at an earlier period. But

"When doctrines meet with gen'ral approbation,
It is not heresy but reformation,"¹

¹ David Garrick.

CHAPTER XVII

Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Orrock—"Always in power"—A National Gallery of British Art—C. R. Leslie, R.A., and "squint-eyed saints"—A confuted disputant—*Punch* on Mr. Orrock and his mission—Thomas Collier: Mr. Orrock's appreciation of him—Anecdotes—The Royal Academy Exhibition of Historical Water-Colours—The *Spectator's* criticism of Cox, William Hunt, De Wint, and Barret—"A foxy sun"—Mr. Orrock's reply—Mr. W. M. Rossetti on William Hunt—Mr. Frederick Wedmore on David Cox—"The Vale of Clwyd"—The extraordinary rise in the price of David Cox's oil-pictures—Initiatory cause—Mr. Orrock and the Birmingham millionaire—The deterioration of English pictures in the National Gallery—Mr. Orrock's and Sir James Linton's protest—Its effect.

FOR a long time, while losing no opportunity of button-holing members of both the Upper and the Lower House, and other people likely to advance his cherished purpose, Mr. Orrock lay in wait to capture Mr. Gladstone and, if possible, make him a convinced convert and potent and practical missionary. It was at the galleries of the Messrs. Agnew in Bond Street that the meeting took place. Sir William Agnew introduced him to Mr. Gladstone. "My object," says Mr. Orrock, "was to place before him a scheme for the representation of our great British Art in the National Gallery on a site which is at present occupied by the barracks. The new wing was to be called the National Gallery of British Art, and was to contain selected pictures from the collections now in the National Gallery itself, South Kensington Museum, and the British Museum. Of course, an Act of Parliament would be required to give the design effect. The larger galleries in this suggested new wing might be devoted to oil-pictures, and certain of the smaller to water-colours, engravings, and typical examples of black-and-white work. Space, I submitted, should be found for the abiding exhibition of examples of Elizabethan, Jacobæan, and Queen Anne furniture, with of course specimens of furniture by Chippendale, Sheraton, Hepplewhite,

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Sherer, and other noted workers. These to be interspersed with low cabinets, inlaid and painted, chiefly of the last century. I made the most of my time, and went as far as it permitted into the details of my idea. With such an exhibition, an association of foreign and native art kept distinct and classified, yet comprehended under the same roof, foreigners and our own people would be able to judge of the magnitude, the universality, and the beauty of our great national art. With such a congeries of galleries, established on what I venture to think is one of the finest sites in Europe, and forming in its entirety a national temple of the arts, there would be encouragement to collectors to give and bequeath valuable works—especially valuable English works—to enrich and complete the collection. Finally, I said my utmost to emphasise the fact that the undertaking as I had sketched it would afford much additional room in the present galleries for the old masters of the great schools. Mr. Gladstone was most kind. He listened to what I said with earnest attention, declared that he cordially agreed with the proposal, and would gladly help to forward it. 'But,' he added, 'I am not now in power, Mr. Orrock.' I ventured to reply, 'Mr. Gladstone, you are *always* in power!' He smiled at this, and when, as a parting shot, I remarked that the cost of the proposed building would be less than half that of an ironclad, and would tend, by the cultivation of the arts of peace, to settle the differences among the nations by arbitration, he deplored the necessity there was for building those dreadful vessels of war. In shaking hands with me he repeated his wish to help forward my project and promised to see me again. He would call upon me. Alas! he never did. A terrible party struggle that had been impending brought him again into the political arena, and the visit to my house, which I had anticipated with so much pleasure—for there I could have illustrated my contention with the aid of the object lessons in my own collection—remained unpaid."

It was such strenuous advocacy of his commanding idea, in season and (no doubt so considered by many persons and person-

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ages who were quietly contented with the existing state of things) out of season, that engendered a conviction in many quarters that Mr. Orrock would sooner or later witness the achievement of his hopes. "There is every indication," said a commentator in the public press, "that British art, and therefore the British nation, will be indebted to Mr. James Orrock for the establishment of a National Gallery of British Art." It is nine years since that somewhat prophetic comment appeared in print. The subject of it had read his paper before the Society of Arts, and received the silver medal of that body in acknowledgment of the importance of the cause and the ability of the pleader. The same year Mr. Orrock took part in a Conference of the Association for the Advancement of Art and its Application to Industry at Birmingham. Not for the first time did he lift up his voice, as well in favour of a National Gallery of British Art as against "too much of the picture money which was paid annually by the people being spent," as it was, "on golden-gloried, squint-eyed, triangular Byzantine saints." Professor Conway, in his indignation at what the *Times* humorously described as "this outburst of profanity," declared that "English art of the present century might very well wait until its position in art history was absolutely fixed, which would not be probably for two hundred years." Such professional dicta may be proclaimed with safety, in any assemblage, about anything. And it is frequently done. But only the ages (when they care to take the trouble) can confirm or make foolish the promises of such a prophet. Besides, in respect of this particular prediction, was not the position of the English art of the present century already fixed? No doubt the employment by Mr. Orrock of those unflattering adjectives sharpened the exasperation of Professor Conway. In reference to his diatribe Mr. Orrock protests that "I have always said that no one admires, and I think no one appreciates, the pre-Raphaelite masters more than I do. What I quarrel with is the expenditure of so much money on them to the neglect of our national art, examples of

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which are daily becoming more and more costly. My *free-hand* adjectives were, I admit, used chiefly for effect, and to concentrate attention on the question at issue." Mr. Orrock, however, is not alone in using a Philistine form of abuse of a well-known type of Old Master. A writer in one of the Reviews—since defunct that is, the Review—dealing with Mr. Orrock in a minatory spirit, described the saints in question as "cock-eyed." But, let the original observer of the strabismic peculiarity in question be heard. C. R. Leslie, R.A., in his "Hand-Book for Young Painters," the greater part of which consists of lectures delivered at the Royal Academy, makes a plain statement which goes farther even than Mr. Orrock has gone in the deprecatory line of criticism with which, with its sweepingly characteristic phraseology, the subject of these pages has been identified. He says, "Angelico believed of himself that his pencil wrought by the immediate inspiration of Heaven, and thought it would be presumptuous to alter his first conceptions; yet, in one of the few pictures I have seen by this hand, the principal face, and that, too, of a divine personage, squints."¹ Mr. Orrock's advocacy met with some opposition. Some of it was silly, as when an adversary—a paragraphist—said of him, "He is convinced that the 'bits' and 'studies' produced by the members of the Old Water-Colour Society are the acme of art, and that it is our duty to buy none but British-painted pictures." Some made a sacrifice of truth for the sake of smartness, as when one of his assailants said that, "Not content with having room after room in South Kensington cluttered up

¹ No competent writer on the subject has been severer in his strictures on the purchases for the National Gallery than Leslie. He says in a note to an observation in the text, to wit: "Our National Gallery has nothing that can be considered as a worthy specimen of mediæval art." "While these pages are passing through the press, I observe that four specimens of early art have been purchased for the nation. A picture, ruined in its colour, of a Madonna and Child, attended by angels, and appearing to a saint, who has a desk, with a book and papers before him, *supposed* to be by Masaccio; an indifferent portrait *supposed* to be by Albert Dürer, but destitute of any of the excellence of that great painter; a Holy Family, *supposed* to be by a *pupil* of Leonardo da Vinci; and a Head of the Saviour, of no value whatever, by an unknown painter."

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with the works of English water-colourists, Mr. Orrock would carry on the same practice at the National Gallery." In quoting from the papers and letters of the champion of British art, certain of his critics were not entirely guiltless of adopting what Charles Reade called "the sham sample swindle." To one of these Mr. Orrock replied, "I was speaking all through about the national collection in what we know as the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square; and an 'Historical Collection' anywhere is not what we want, but the best examples of the masters' works which deserve a history. At Kensington we have a large number of drawings by masters, but only a few which truly represent what those masters were capable of. History does not teach art, but fine works do! A collection, not necessarily large, of choice examples is what we want, and not a multitude of scoured and mildewed pictures, and drawings, which not only do not represent the art, but do not deserve a history." An enthusiastic supporter of the cause, expressing himself in a journal of high distinction, went a trifle too far when he said that, "With one accord the papers have rallied with leaders, notes, reports, and articles, to Mr. Orrock's banner." But, only a trifle. There was substantial truth in the declaration. One humorous commentator compared Mr. Orrock's strenuous efforts to bring about a change in the administration of our National Galleries with Mr. Henniker Heaton's untiring endeavour to reform the Post-Office. *Punch* was on Mr. Orrock's side. Under the heading of "English, you know, quite English," Mr. (afterwards Sir Henry) Tate was coupled with Mr. Orrock as follows:—

"Perhaps the good old rule, that 'You should never look a gift-horse in the mouth,' cannot be so rigorously applied to gifts of pictures to the nation as to other things. Nevertheless, Mr. Tate's munificent proffer of his collection to the National Gallery is surely too good a thing to be missed through matters of mere detail. *Mr. Punch's* view is—well, despite *Touchstone's* attack on 'the very false gallop of verses,' there are two things that

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come most insinuatingly in metre; offers of love, and of friendly advice :—

'English Art no longer paints
Those "squint-eyed Byzantine saints"
Mr. ORROCK so disparages.
Martyrdoms and Cana Marriages
Overstock our great Art Gallery,
Giving ground for ORROCK's raillery.
Scenes in desert dim or dun stable
Than green English lanes by CONSTABLE
Are less welcome, or brown rocks
And grey streams by DAVID COX.
Saint Sebastian's death? Far sweeter
Sylvan scenes by honest PETER;
There's a charm in dear DE WINT
Cannot be conveyed in print.
Verdant landscapes, seascapes cool,
Painted by the English School,
Must be welcome to our British
Taste, which is not grim or skittish;
Rather Philistine, it may be,
Sweet on cornfields and the Baby;
Yet of ROMNEY's grace no spurner,
Or the golden dreams of TURNER.
Moral? Well, a moral, bless us!
Comes like that old shirt of NESSUS.
Still, here goes! An Art-official
Should be genial, but judicial.
When an Art-Collection's national,
It is obviously rational
It should be a bit eclectic,
Weeding out the crude or hectic.
He who'd have his country's honour,
As a liberal Art-donor,
Thinks more of his country's fame
Than of *his* particular name.
Would you win true reputation
As benefactor of the Nation?
Trust me, 'tis not 'special room'
Keeps *that* glory in full bloom.
Punch is a plain-speaking chap;
Here's his view of things. *Verb. sap!*'"

In this page, as appropriately perhaps as in another, an account may be given of Mr. Orrock's first association with a water-colour

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painter who, he doubts not, is in the front rank of the later masters of the English school. Henry Dawson had been made known to him in the same way, through his pictures, with the delightful sensation of discovery, and in each case the encounter led to a life-long personal communion.

"About twenty-five years ago," says Mr. Orrock, "I happened to be in the Round Room of the Birmingham Society of Artists. Mr. William Hall, Cox's intimate friend and biographer, approached and asked my opinion of a fine upright drawing by Whittaker (of the Old Society of Painters in Water-Colours) which occupied a central position on the walls. I naturally expressed my warm approval of the work, but added, 'I consider that drawing on the floor by a new man—at any rate, he is new to me—is essentially a finer drawing in every sense and degree; it is neither so large nor so important in composition as the Whittaker, but it is vastly superior in colour and quality.' As I said this, with the earnestness of complete conviction, we were joined by Mr. Flavell, a well-known musician and art collector in Birmingham, to whom Hall remarked, 'What do you think Orrock says?' 'Oh,' replied he, 'I cannot guess. There is no accounting for him. He would say anything!' Hall thereupon repeated my observations. To my astonishment Flavell slapped me on the shoulder, and exclaimed, 'Orrock, you are right! Quite right, old boy! Would you like that drawing? It was painted by a new man named Collier, and I can part with it because I happen to be his banker.' Flavell invited me to his house and showed me a number of drawings by Thomas Collier. After carefully looking through several portfolios of them, I said, 'Well, this is a master in our English Water School, just below the greatest, but above Whittaker.' 'Will you help me to raise this young and unknown artist to his proper place?' said Flavell. I replied I would do my best. 'Then,' he added, 'you can have as many of the drawings as you please at the price I paid for them.' I selected a number, and on my return to London I showed them to some good judges of the art, and from that time

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Collier rapidly advanced in 'reputation.' Not, however, without interruption. He applied for admission to the old Water-Colour Society, and was backed in his candidature by some of the leading members, but he was rejected. He made a second attempt with the same disheartening result. After the second failure he was invited to join the New Society, now the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-Colours, which at that time held its exhibitions in Pall Mall.

"It is perhaps not too much to say that 'Tom' Collier was the finest of sky painters, especially of rain and cumulus clouds, while possessing more mastery of direct modelling and pearl-grey shadows in his skies and landscapes than any member of our brotherhood. His painting of cloud-life was little short of magical. He was slow and deliberate, and when he had finished the intention was complete. In moorland, with brilliant skies full of 'accident,' he has never had a rival. He did me the honour to ask an exchange of our drawings, mine being a cornfield which he fancied. One Sunday morning, between the hours of eleven and two, he painted in my presence a moorland and 'crockery sky' drawing, which is as perfect as art can make it. Collier was born at Glossop, in Derbyshire, and studied art in Manchester, but, of course, he drew his inspiration from nature and the masters. He and Müller were the most impressive sketchers from nature I know. Collier's admiration for the great masters was profound. No works amongst those of the great water-colour artists give me more pleasure in their way than Collier's. Had his health been robust he would have painted magnificent pictures in oil. The few he did are as fine as his water-colours. Collier's colour was always true and brilliant. From the first lay-in of his work to the final touch he never gave away a point. On the contrary, every note meant something that had to be expressed in 'the painter's voice.'"

Mr. Flavell, confirmed in his discernment of Collier's gifts and power by Mr. Orrock's instant alliance with him as an appreciative patron of Collier, lost no opportunity in advancing his cause. He

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was one day praising to a friend, who had seen the picture before, a sombre, low-toned moorland landscape with a grand impressive sky. His laudation was as fervent as the cause of it was inspiring. He was anxious, it may also be observed, to secure Collier another patron. However, the possible purchaser was not to be persuaded. He said the picture lacked interest. Mr. Flavell said, "Yes, I dare-say. You have remarked that before. I told Collier what you said, and, in fact, I urged him to put a Punch-and-Judy Show in the foreground, but the obstinate fellow declared that he would not do it." Collier was an imperturbable person with a quiet, even-paced speech that defied disturbance. On one occasion he was sketching in a field, the owner of which had no feeling for art, and an invincible objection to trespassers. Approaching the painter he exclaimed angrily, "I want to know how you came into this field?" Collier replied, "By that gate." "Then you will go out by that gate," said the farmer. "That is my intention," was the rejoinder. Which intention he duly fulfilled, when he had tranquilly completed the sketch.

Mr. Orrock possesses, with other fine drawings made about the same period, Collier's magnificent work "The Cumberland Fells," which was chalked with a "D" (for Doubtful) by the Council of the Royal Academy. The "D" is yet visible on the back of the drawing. It was the greatest piece of work of its kind exhibited in the Water-Colour Gallery the first year the Royal Academy show took place at Burlington House. The alleged cause of Collier's being twice rejected by the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours, which obtained currency in the gossip of the studios, was that "the Society did not want two Whittakers." On the occasion of the second refusal Collier called at 48 Bedford Square, when Mr. Orrock advised him to join the Institute; adding, that some day the elder Society would repent of its want of appreciation and foresight. His was not the only case of an artist who, shut out in Pall Mall, has been admitted in Piccadilly. Whether repentance in every instance supervened may be left to conjecture. On the other hand, as public

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history reveals, some of the best artists in the Old Society were seceders from the Institute.

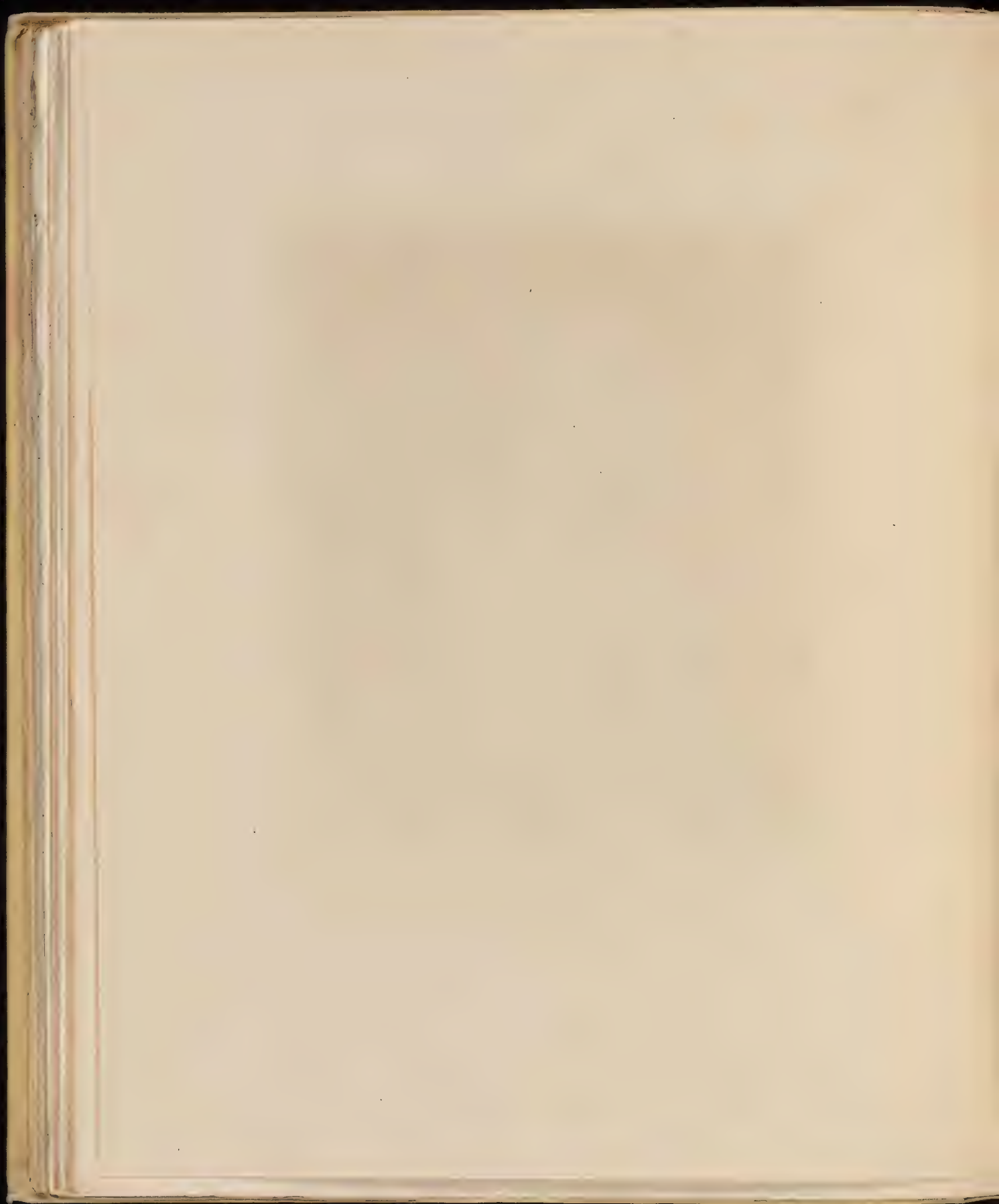
In 1891 there was brought together at the Royal Academy an historical collection of English water-colours, ranging from Paul Sandby to Frederick Walker. The critic who reviewed the exhibition in the *Spectator* found "David Cox, an artist who could render with some skill the play of light and mist on objects, but whose impressions included no sensibility to colour." Also that "he is pleasant enough in his negative studies, like the 'Greenwich Hospital' and the 'Darley Churchyard'; but those who can enjoy pictures like the 'Changing Pasture' and the 'Vale of Clwyd,' which pass for masterpieces among Cox's admirers, must be as insensible in this respect as the painter." This was pretty well in its calmly scornful brushing aside of Cox's admirers as so many know-nothings who could not see colour; but worse, or better in its display of the critic's iconoclastic method, remained behind. This, for instance: "De Wint is an artist who once out of a hundred times surprises one with a masterly sketch, broad and simple, and delightful in a limited scale of golden browns. There is nothing of the kind here; only the familiar work where the first intention of the sketch has been overlaid with dead stupid paint. William Hunt follows with his niggling for niggling's sake, his affection for hot browns and reds in homely circumstances. The would-be realist is followed by the would-be idealist, no less than seven George Barrets, a foxy sun in a woolly nature."¹

Mr. Orrock replied. Discussing the question of "an art, British in origin and character," being "scurvily treated by the nation," the writer of the article had said "that if some artistic despot had the power to pick out of public and private collections the best works of one or two men who have used the medium to artistic purpose, such works would well deserve a place at Trafalgar

¹ Mr. Ruskin speaks somewhere of George Barret's landscapes, "which afford glorious and exalted passages of light."



Portrait of a Lady



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Square." Beginning with the stigma on De Wint, Mr. Orrock said:—

"Being the fortunate possessor of No. 102, and knowing that sketch to be one from Nature, 'broad and simple,' one is greatly exercised to know where it has been overlaid and deadened with stupid paint. Surely this is a first-intention drawing without an overlaying influence. Is Mr. Vaughan's picture (99) overlaid also? No man who has lived with and studied De Wint's drawings can listen to this without a feeling of pity for such ignorance and assurance. De Wint, too, of all men, in his finished drawings had the power of retaining the bloom, luminosity, and strength in his middle distances, and the secret died with him. Hunt follows with 'his niggling for niggling's sake, and his affection also for hot browns and reds in homely circumstances.' Would an 'artistic despot' say that Mr. Nettlefold's 'Girl Plucking a Fowl' (115) was niggling for niggling's sake? Is 'The Blessing' also for niggling's sake? Where does this quality begin and end? We have been told, and some among us know, that such work is the perfection of the water-colour art, but no doubt under 'homely circumstances,' like Burns and Morland and Wilkie, and now and then Rembrandt and Frank Hals. Let us hope again, however, that, niggling and homely as some of Hunt's works may be, the 'artistic despot' will spare us one or more for our coming permanent gallery.

"The would-be realist is followed by the would-be idealist, George Barret's foxy sun in a 'woolly nature.' Gracious Heaven! what can this mean! Barret was a painter of light, and was called the English Cuyp. He would as soon dream of painting a foxy sun as of making one of crape! Barret, of all men, saved up his white paper for his sun and high lights. He might be found fault with for leaving his sun too light, but never for making it foxy. This must be a joke like the 'woolly nature.' We have heard of the woolly horse, and some of us have seen it, but although Barret painted horses beautifully, he never made them woolly. It

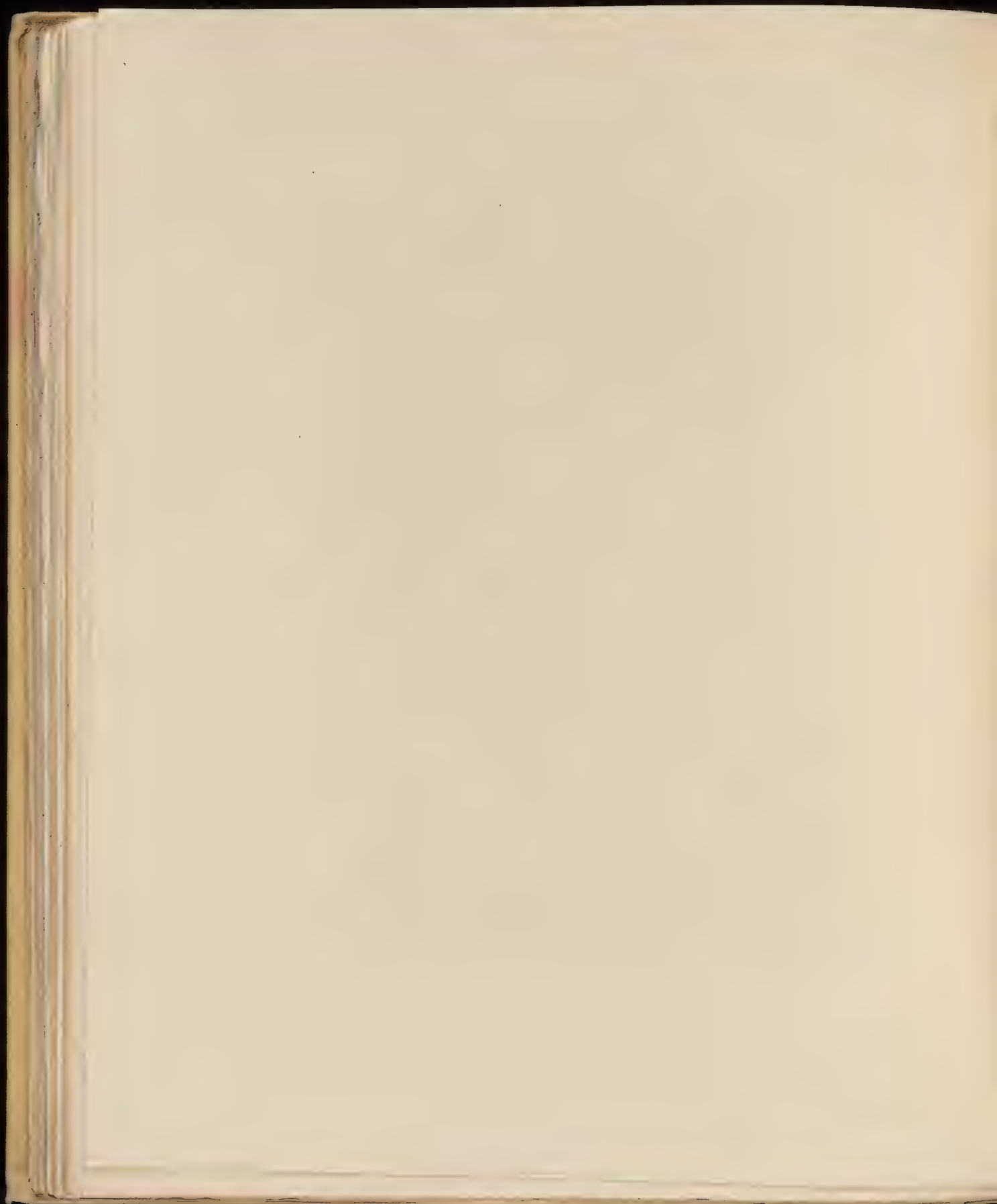
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must be a misprint, and ought to have been *woody*, not 'woolly,' for in No. 121 there is a sun, but not a foxy one, and a woody landscape, with unwoolly horses pulling a *timber* waggon up a hill. If this is a misprint or a joke, it might be applied to the trees and timber waggon. We pray, however, yet again for the 'artistic despot' to spare such as the 'Timber Waggon,' with its 'woolly nature,' for the representation of our water-colour masters whose names are household words."

The critic in his reply was considered to have revealed himself and his limits in respect of the proper formation of a National Gallery when he said, "There is no difference between us [Mr. Orrock and himself] in the view that, if the National Gallery could be treated as a gallery of masterpieces, all schools would have to suffer weeding, and, most of all, the English; only we think that many of the rejected of our school would be better disposed, not in a provincial, but in a pathological museum, and that, with due regard to balance and the needs of English students, the gaps would be better filled by examples of the modern French and Dutch masters, as yet wholly unrepresented." He naïvely adds that "to join issue on a question of colour is a difficult thing." No doubt. Elsewhere in these pages a case is recounted in which three art-critics joined issue on such a question, and each saw a passage of colour differently. In other words, it was not the same colour to the whole three. Whether the writer in the *Spectator* evaded the point made by Mr. Orrock with reference to De Wint, and if so how far he shifted his ground, may be left to the reader, after a consideration of the argument. He said, "Of the De Wints, it may be readily allowed that the two referred to by Mr. Orrock are the best in the exhibition; but again, they are not De Wint's best." There is nothing here about De Wint's practice, not a word in justification of the charge against an artist remarkable for the calculated intention and purity of his brush-work, of having "overlaid" his finished drawings with "dead stupid paint." As if De Wint, with his spacious power and decision, could do anything



The Vale of Goryd.



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of the kind! "As to Hunt, no taunt was intended against his choice of subjects." Then why make it? Why speak sneeringly of "the would-be realist"? "They are admirable," the writer adds, "for the right artist." Thackeray was wont to wax enthusiastic in expressing his opinion that Hunt was "the right artist" for the subjects which he painted. Mr. W. M. Rossetti,¹ too, has borne glowing testimony on the same side. As to Mr. Ruskin's exquisite appreciation of William Hunt it is not necessary to add a single word to what appears in the citation following Mr. Orrock's essay on the artist and his art. The writer of the *Spectator* article said finally, in what he conceived to be an answer to Mr. Orrock, that "in the case of Barret, 'foxy' was applied, not to the disk of the sun, but to the general colour-effect it produces in the picture; 'woolly,' to the character of his drawing." To be sure. Only the white disk had been described as a "foxy sun." Brought to bay, he dodged the disk and took refuge in the general colour, which he had not before mentioned. "Foxy" and "woolly" and scores of similar thought-economising epithets are part of the cheap ammunition of the censorious art-critic, as *Punch* pointed out fifty years ago, and Mr. Asquith has referred to since. It was Lord Byron, was it not, who, himself unable to punctuate his copy, yet resenting the tricks which he conceived the compositors played with it, suggested that the latter shook the points out of a pepper-box? It would almost appear as though certain art-critics pursued a similar practice with such stereotyped epithets as "foxy" and "woolly" and the like.

When David Cox's "Vale of Clwyd" (in oil) was offered for public competition for the first time at Christie's rooms, Mr. Orrock

¹ "In still-life painting, especially that branch of it which tends to simple object-painting, Hunt may rank as the greatest artist on record. His treatment of such subjects includes every element pertaining to them, and every one in perfection. As a delineator of rustic or out-of-the-way character, he was equally great, though not so absolutely unrivalled. In both classes of work, and in whatever else he did, he was not, with all his extreme faithfulness, a mere imitator or transcriber, but essentially a re-moulder of the literal according to the truth of artistic invention and perception."—W. M. Rossetti in *Fine Arts Quarterly Review*.

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wrote to the *Times* urging that "if this famous picture by our own famous painter could be secured for our National Gallery it would give pleasure and instruction to thousands to-day and for generations to come. The chronic cry is, there are no funds! The answer is, there are always funds enough for the purchase of numbers of pictures by second-rate Dutch and other foreign painters, of which we already have a surfeit; whereas David Cox and other English masters are not represented by a single example in oil or water-colour. Here, then, is Cox's celebrated oil-picture for sale, which in its way is an English impressionist picture of the highest class. The tax-paying public demand that a fair proportion of their picture-money should be spent on first-rate examples of our own masters' works, and not on second-rate pictures by painters in any foreign school." The appeal was fruitless. But Mr. Orrock's fear lest the picture should fall to the bid of some American or Australian millionaire, thanks to the spirit of a notable English collector, was patriotically removed. Mr. T. J. Barratt was a buyer for 4500 guineas, and the picture forms one of the gems of that gentleman's famous collection at Bell-Moor, Hampstead Heath.

Cox, the critic in the *Spectator* declared off-hand, with that easy air of patronage that is characteristic of the oracle in Art, "could render with some skill the play of light and mist on objects, but whose impressions included no sensibility to colour."

Compare this after-dinner or smoking-room deliverance, this flippant outburst of Podsnappery, with what Mr. Frederick Wedmore,¹ with poetical insight and large appreciation of the painter's method and meaning, has said of David Cox. Compare and then say which is the more kindred, and therefore the faithfuller interpreter. "Many artists, since Cox, have been to Bettwys, and some had been there before him; but the rest have been content to find there what is commonly pretty and easily picturesque—for

¹ "David Cox." *The Gentleman's Magazine*, March 1878.

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the most part the mere traditional and accepted beauty of falling water, and sky reflected in clear and shallow streams, and sunlight glinting through green leafage—the art of our lightest and emptiest hours—the water-colour of the drawing-room. Cox found other things—the truer characteristics of that remote scenery and of its desolate life: the woods heavy with rain, the stone-walled fields, the dogged tramp of the cloaked peasant woman over the wet path, the blown shepherd and huddled flock on the mountain sheep-walk. Cox entered into the spirit of that lonely landscape, simple and humble even in its grandeur—by turns melancholy, admonishing, passionate. For him alone the landscape of Wales, with its winds and showers, grey and shrouded mornings, spaces of quietness and tender light breaking out in evening skies after a day of storm, was alive and expressive.” Again, on the question of colour, if it could ever be a question to the healthy perceptive eye, Mr. Wedmore says, “Cox worked much in sepia; in sepia, too, for his proper satisfaction and benefit, and not only as lessons to pupils. Vivid effects portrayed at the hour of their observation convince us of this, but we are convinced also that for the full exercise of his genius the range of the water-colour painter needed to be available—black and white were not enough for him. Moisture and wind and wide spaces and movement were within the range of David Cox in black and white. He was perhaps too absolute a colourist to dispense with colour in sunshine. His richest harmonies are harmonies in colour; it is in colour that his tone is generally truest.” This is the criticism of a right interpreter. The exposition of insight. The appreciation of the art and meaning of the painter’s slightest touch.¹

It may be mentioned here that Mr. Orrock was no doubt the unwitting cause of the rapid rise, after it began, in public estimation

¹ “It is with poetry—though few seem practically inclined to admit this—as it is with any other art: the fewest possible touches, the slightest possible shades of colour or of sound, suffice to show, what all the explanation and demonstration in the world will fail to demonstrate or explain, the rank and character of the genius which inspired them.”—*Miscellanies*, by Algernon Charles Swinburne (Chatto & Windus).

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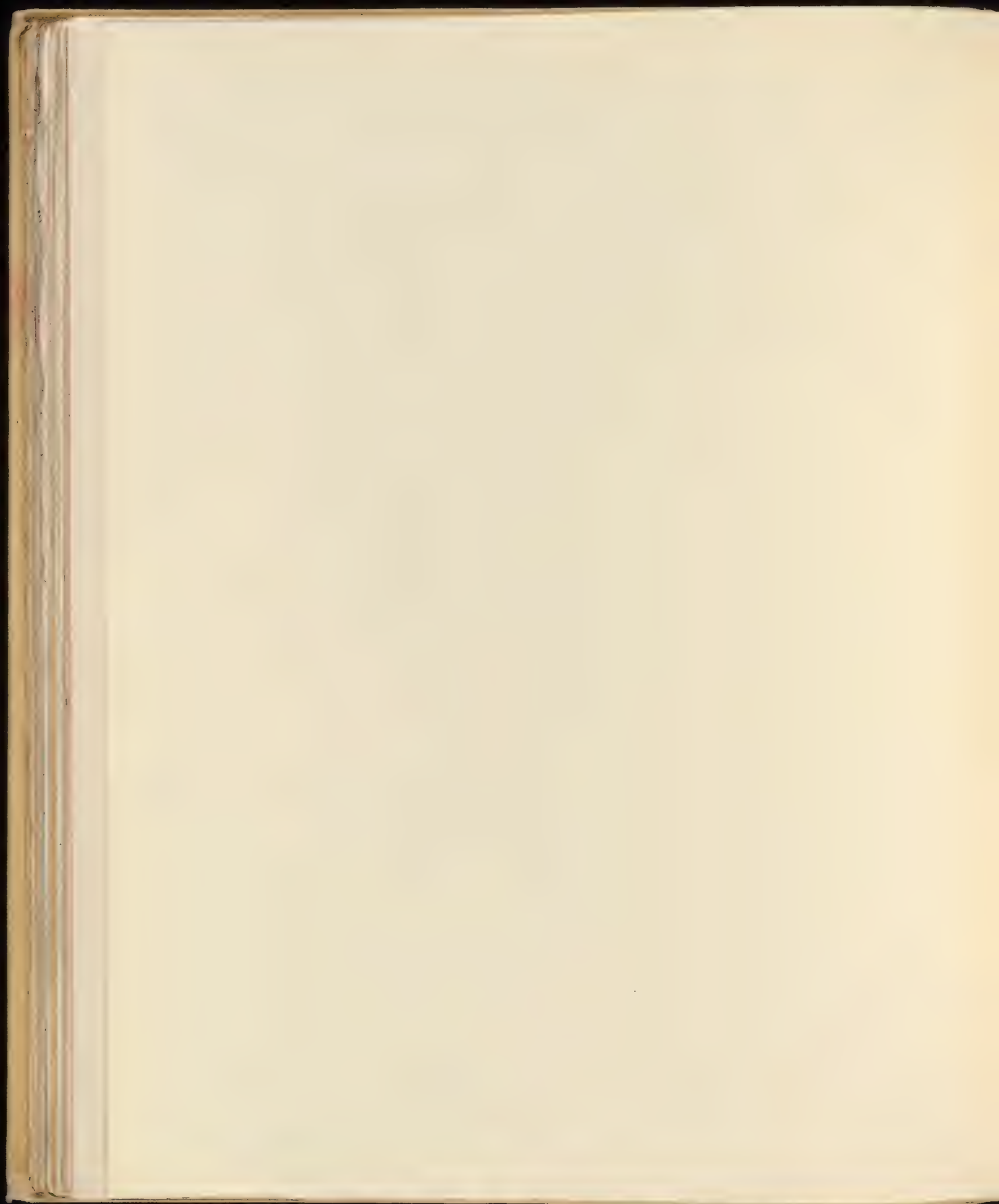
of David Cox's pictures, especially of his oil-paintings. For years before the *crescendo* advance, which took place in Birmingham, Mr. Orrock had collected gradually, for his personal pleasure and instruction, a small but choice number of Cox drawings and paintings in oil, the best of which were acquired during his residence in Nottingham. The great bound, however, was caused by Gillott, the steel-pen millionaire, buying them up. During visits which Mr. Orrock paid to Birmingham his friend William Hall, Cox's biographer, from time to time showed him beautiful examples of that master. On one memorable occasion he was shown the celebrated picture in oil called "Peace and War," which belonged to Mr. Dawes of Moseley Hall, near Birmingham, and which was for sale. The price was £450, and it being a small picture, Mr. Orrock thought it very dear. At that time, between thirty and forty years ago, it *was* dear, albeit it was one of Cox's finest works. Mr. Gillott happened to call on Mr. Hall, who told him that Mr. Orrock had seen the work and admired it exceedingly. "What did Orrock say, William?" asked Mr. Gillott. Replied Mr. Hall, "He looked closely at it for some time, and then said that to his mind it was the perfection of oil landscape-painting, because it had the strength of an oil-picture and the air and purity of a water-colour drawing. And, he added, it is mosaicked like the colours in a Persian carpet." "What could he mean by that, William?" rejoined Mr. Gillott. Replied Mr. Hall, "He was speaking of the harmonious blending of the colours in the Persian carpet." "Do *you* think so?" queried Gillott. "Yes, I do," replied Hall with emphasis, for he was an enthusiast on the subject of his beloved friend David's art. Now, Gillott had hitherto rather slighted Cox, perhaps because he felt that another prophet should be added to the multitude who were without honour in their own country. But he bought the picture.

This was the beginning. The Birmingham millionaire went on buying, and, with the extraordinary good fortune which attended such investments, he fastened on the oil-pictures. The effect of his



From Orsby

BRADGATE PARK, WITH THE RESERVOIR. (WATER-COLOUR SKETCH) 1892.



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purchases was soon felt. The master's works were enhanced in monetary value in an extraordinary degree. As to "Peace and War"—to anticipate somewhat the grand result—it was knocked down at the Gillott sale in April 1872 for 3430 guineas. However, as before stated, Mr. Orrock had collected a number of Coxes some years before. With the speedy rise in their price his reputation for far-seeing sagacity augmented. The simple truth of the matter was, that he bought them because he liked them. Had he been gifted with the prescience, with a modicum of the foresight with which he was credited, he, as he says, would have filled his house with them, for their market value was then small. Mr. Orrock possessed at the same time works by Constable, Linnell, Henry Dawson, William Hunt, Barret, Bonington, &c., all of which had been to him very cheap indeed. But that was some forty years ago!

Mr. Orrock (with Sir James Linton) in his protest in 1893, against what he held to be the avoidable deterioration of certain of the English pictures in the National Gallery, attracted the attention of press and public to a much-needed reform. The *Magazine of Art*, May 1893, says:—

"A very serious charge has been brought against the directorate of the National Gallery in the following letter, which, under date 5th April 1893, Mr. James Orrock has addressed to us: 'On Monday last [Bank Holiday] a friend from the country and I visited the National Gallery chiefly to see the English pictures. Of course, as before, we were unable to see the Turner water-colours, the *Liber Studiorum*, the De Wints, &c., for the iron gates were barred against us. My reason for writing to you now, however, is to direct attention to the fact that in the English Gallery, No. XX., there are more cracked and perished pictures than are to be found in all the other galleries put together. No. 404, Stanfield's picture, "Entrance to the Zuyder Zee," on the left-hand side, is simply shrivelled and in "islets." Leslie's "Uncle Toby and Widow Wadman," No. 403, is as bad; while Stothard's "Greek Vintage," No. 317, and Wilkie's "Village Festival" and "Blind Fiddler"

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are on the same road to ruin. We are, of course, informed that the use of bitumen is the cause of the damage, because it ebbs and flows according to the temperature. The Dutch, German, and Italian Masters ran no such risk, because they never used bitumen. Will it be believed, however, although every schoolboy knows the fatal propensities of this colour, that no precautions are taken even to *palliate* the evil? on the contrary, means are adopted to *develop* it! My friend and I were *officially* informed on Monday last that the dry heat in the old *foreign* Masters' Galleries was tempered by the presence of water; whereas in the galleries of our own masters, where it is *specially* needed, no water is supplied. Is it intended rapidly to destroy from the face of the earth numbers of our valuable English pictures by depriving them of the only remedy against the searching dry heat to which they are constantly exposed? If, in a word, the foreign pictures without bitumen need moisture, how much more do those with bitumen require it? Let any one examine the matter for himself by paying a visit to the National Gallery.'

"In the face of a heavy indictment such as this, the authorities at the National Gallery cannot remain inactive. We have ourselves paid a visit to Trafalgar Square, and can bear testimony to the allegations advanced with so much frank emphasis by Mr. Orrock. He has even understated the extent of the damage now proceeding. It is surely only necessary to place the facts before the notice of Sir Frederick Burton, to have immediate attention paid to them, and a stop put to this deplorable state of things. Sir Frederick, in his reply, hardly seems as yet to admit their seriousness. But we cannot agree with him that the English pictures are foredoomed to perdition; nor can we see why the precautionary measures taken for the protection of foreign pictures should be denied to English. Water, says the Director, is only necessary in the foreign galleries, as so many of the pictures are painted on panel. Very well; but is it not a fact that nearly three score of English pictures are painted upon panel too? and being, moreover, tainted with bitumen, require the protection of water *still more* than the foreign works? And

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we cannot forget that several of our greatest treasures notably those by Wilkie—are painted upon panel: masterpieces on which is largely based the claim of the English school for excellence."

To follow the controversy step by step would profit little. Two Directors of the National Gallery, as fate had it, replied in succession to Mr. Orrock. One admitted the absence of water in the British rooms and its presence in others, but he explained that the British pictures were perishing because asphaltum was used in their composition, and its process of decay all known precautions were absolutely powerless to arrest. Many of the foreign pictures were painted on wooden panels, and on these the moisture had the effect of preventing contraction and cracks. Mr. Orrock, having made investigations, rejoined that fifty-five of the British pictures were also painted on panels. The other Director's answer amounted to little more than a denial of the statements in the charge made by Mr. Orrock and Sir James Linton, together with an avowal to the effect that the remedies were either unworthy of consideration or had already been applied. It had, however, been pointed out by Mr. Orrock that in the Diploma Gallery of the Royal Academy, not half a mile from Trafalgar Square, there had been hanging a number of pictures exactly alike in origin and date as those proved to be decaying (Stanfield's "Zuyder Zee," and Wilkie's "Blind Fiddler," for example) in the National Gallery—pictures by Wilkie, Stanfield, and other artists of that period—which were essentially in good preservation: the reason being, that the Diploma Gallery was properly ventilated, from openings in the walls of the gallery, placed close to the floor, through which a certain amount of moisture as well as cool air constantly passed. There had, of course, been the usual question in the House, which had been extinguished in the well-known Barnacle or Stiltstalking manner. But, as the *Times* observed, Sir James Linton and Mr. Orrock had "struck upon a subject of great public interest," and not altogether in vain. Measures have since been adopted to arrest the decay which Mr. Orrock pointed out.

CHAPTER XVIII

Light and water-colours—Mr. (now Sir J. C.) Robinson's sweeping allegation—"The pale ghosts of their former selves"—Sir James D. Linton, P.R.I., in reply—Early drawings in monochrome and "washed"—Later, "painted with pure colour direct"—Drawings by Barret, De Wint, and Cox in perfect condition after being framed and exposed for a period longer than that assigned for the "pale ghost"-ly change—Professor Church interposes his opinion in opposition to Sir James Linton's optimistic views—Mr. Robinson rejoins and widens the attack—"Indian red" in question—Drawings by Turner and engravings from them—"Let them be compared"—An intermediary summing up by the *Times* favouring Mr. Robinson's contention—Sir James Linton's admission that changes have taken place in drawings "from exposure to damp, smoke, direct sunlight, but chiefly from the use of Indian red" coupled with his denial that the alleged changes at South Kensington have occurred—Turner and the engravers—Not "fading" or "disappearance" but the painter's sweeping alterations of the plates—Indian red again—Mr. Walter Severn—Mr. Cavendish Bentinck's challenge—Mr. Ruskin's letter—Mr. Church—Chemist and painter at cross-purposes—Mr. Frank Dillon—Mr. Fawkes disputes that his drawings are faded—Early and late Turners—Mr. Robinson agrees with Mr. Church and tackles Mr. Ruskin—"The scare"—The projected exhibition.

THE paramously important question, to painters in water-colour and to possessors of works executed in that medium, of the effect produced on the drawings by prolonged daylight exposure, was thoroughly fought out, chiefly in the columns of the *Times*, in the year 1887. Naturally Mr. Orrock engaged himself prominently in the fray. He, however, as will be observed in the present summary of the principal points advanced by the various controversialists, came in towards the conclusion of the business, and then in the triple character of painter, connoisseur, and expert. The opening shot was fired by Mr. (now Sir) J. C. Robinson, in a letter which that gentleman wrote to the leading journal on the 10th of March. "I observe," said Mr. Robinson, "that the authorities of the National Gallery are opposed to the opening of that institution in the evenings, on the ground that certain effects, deleterious to the pictures, would be likely to accrue from the

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crowds who would flock to the gallery at such times. In this, I think they are quite right; the dangers they have pointed out are real and cogent." The chief point, argument, contention, advanced by Mr. Robinson, so far as it affected water-colour art and roused the antagonism of painters in water-colours concerned to maintain the claim of their achievements, and, correspondingly, of the achievements of their predecessors to comparatively speaking the possession of as long and as unimpaired a life as oil-paintings, exhibited under identical conditions, will be found embodied in this passage: "At the South Kensington Museum an important collection of water-colour drawings has been continuously exhibited in the full daylight for twenty or thirty years past, and I have no hesitation in saying that by the mere fact of such exposure all these drawings have been more or less irrevocably injured, and that in many cases the specimens are now as it were but the pale ghosts of their former selves. These treasures, then, have sufficed for the delectation of one generation only, and we ourselves have practically used them up. At the British Museum, on the other hand, there is a noble—perhaps unrivalled—collection of drawings by the ancient masters. These drawings happily have been carefully stowed away in portfolios, and sedulously kept from the light. Practically they have suffered no deterioration in our own time."

Inasmuch as Mr. Robinson's "alternative plan" for remedying the real or alleged evil attracted as much attention and provoked as much comment as his statement of the grievance, it is but fair to quote his words. "This," wrote he, "is what I propose. Neither of these categories of works suffers in any appreciable degree by exposure to artificial light. If, indeed, the searching beams of the electric light, which for various reasons is the only artificial illuminant which should be allowed in museums and art galleries, were found to have any bleaching effect, it would in any case be infinitely less than that of the full glare of day. Exposure to it, however, would be for comparatively short periods only,

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and the works being covered up at all other times, the fading effects would be infinitesimal and might be practically disregarded. Let, then, our national collections of drawings of all kinds, wherever they may be located, be exhibited to the public in the evenings and at no other time. These things, moreover, would be put under glass, hermetically sealed, so to speak, so that no amount of deleterious effluvia could affect them."

Mr. Robinson had set the drawings at the South Kensington Museum, "the ghosts of their former selves," walking to some purpose. Sir James Linton lost no time in assuming the office of exorcist. Not unjustifiably, the President of the Institute of Painters in Water-Colours "claimed to have had long practical experience in water-colour painting," and "also" the possession of "an intimate acquaintance with the works of the English water-colour school, including the examples at the South Kensington Museum," and he, therefore, speaking for his order, protested "against the sweeping and misleading statements of Mr. J. C. Robinson as to their condition." Writing after again carefully examining the works in question, Sir James said, "I take this opportunity of submitting some important facts which will prove that the drawings have not suffered from the cause Mr. Robinson states in his letter. The early drawings were, without exception, painted in monochrome and afterwards slightly tinted—such, for instance, as those by Cozens, Girtin, John Varley, and Turner in his early works. As the painters advanced in their work they discarded the monochrome method and painted with pure colour direct. Examples of both methods are numerous in South Kensington Museum, and any one who is thoroughly conversant with the works will at once admit that, with the exception of being slightly lowered in tone, they are in other respects very little changed. Indeed, it is not too much to say, for instance, that the drawing of 'Warkworth,' by Turner, and those by Wm. Haxell, instead of having been bleached by the action of light, are absolutely richer and deeper in tone than when they were first painted.

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The more modern work, the drawings by Hunt, as, to wit, 'The Basket of Fruit,' 'The Spray of May-blossom,' and 'The Doubtful Coin,' are as brilliant as the day they were painted. This applies with equal truth to the 'Nottingham,' by De Wint, the 'Windsor Castle,' and 'Windermere,' by David Cox, and all the Cattermoles."

After quoting Mr. Robinson's observations on the condition of the drawings at South Kensington, and also his remarks on the better preserved works—as he had contended—at the British Museum, Sir James Linton continues: "Will it surprise Mr. Robinson to know that numberless drawings which have not 'been carefully stowed away in portfolios and sedulously kept from the light,' but to my personal knowledge have remained in their frames since they were painted, have practically suffered no 'deterioration' whatever? As a proof of this, perhaps Mr. Robinson would take the trouble to pay a visit to the galleries of Messrs. Agnew in Bond Street, and he will there see three important drawings by Barret, De Wint, and Cox, of larger size than any in the South Kensington Museum, which are in perfect condition, and have remained in their frames for a much longer time than the 'twenty or thirty years' meted out by Mr. Robinson for them to become the 'pale ghosts of their former selves.'"

Professor Church came next with a letter, the apology submitted for writing which was that he had for thirty years "been studying pigments and methods from a scientific point of view." He regretted that he found himself unable to indorse the optimistic opinions of Sir J. D. Linton. The salient points raised by Mr. Church, in agreement with Mr. Robinson, we shall find dealt with in a rejoinder further on. In Mr. Robinson's reply to the President of the Institute of Painters in Water-Colours he took prefatory occasion to state that he too began his "professional career, when a very young man, as a water-colour painter. This, alas! was in the days of Turner, David Cox, and De Wint, and the pigments, processes, and *modus*

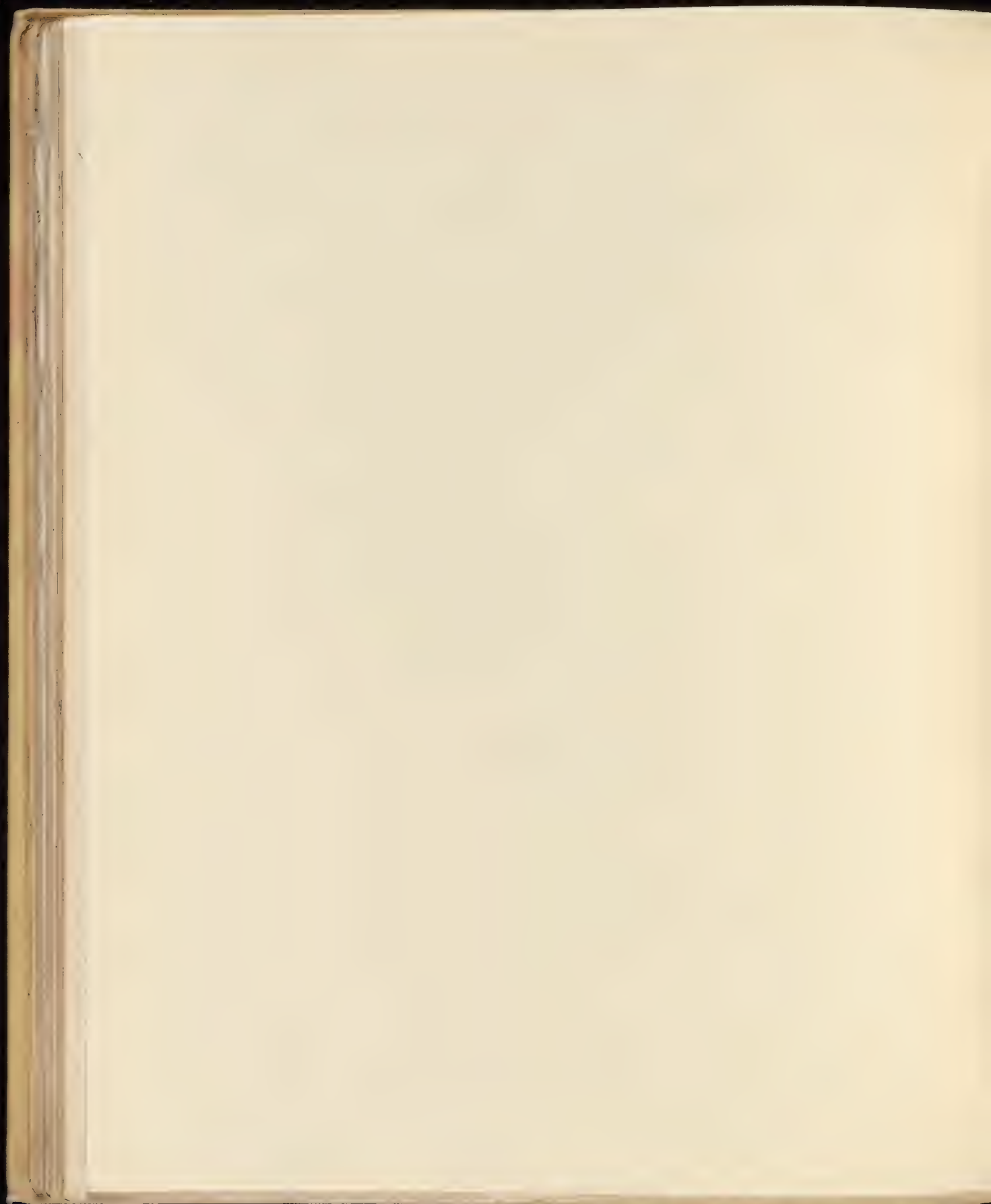
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operandi in general of water-colour painting of that day, to which I apprehend but little of real improvement has been since added, were very well known to me."

Inasmuch as it would be out of accordance with the scope of this work to afford space for a complete recapitulation of the arguments and contentions employed by gentlemen like Mr. Robinson in opposition to the views and convictions of Mr. Orrock, and of those who agree with him, no more than the essence of such letters as that already cited can be given. Mr. Robinson proceeded to maintain that water-colour painters' "productions fade by exposure to the light of day," and that "proofs" of such fading "are everywhere in evidence, and the causes patent and capable of exact scientific demonstration." It will herein be observed that the writer, undismayed by Sir James Linton, added to his first sweeping statement another of the same unqualified character. The sentences which now follow, gleaned here and there from Mr. Robinson's letter, express as fairly as restricted space will permit the points of the controversialist's more elaborate argument: "Painters' pigments in water- and oil-colour are of degrees of relative permanence. It is doubtful whether any one is unchangeable under the influence of light. The more or less fugitive colours are the most numerous and also the most brilliant and useful to the artist. The causes of the greater relative permanence of oil-pictures are mainly (1) that the colours used in them are employed in much greater volume than those in the other medium, and (2) that the pigments are enveloped, or 'locked up,' in a thick protecting medium of oil and varnish. In water-colour painting there is no such protection, and the pigments are applied in far less thickness than in oil-painting. I believe Sir James Linton to be mistaken in his statement that certain water-colour drawings have gained in brilliancy and depth of tone by age. Not only do water-colour drawings fade by exposure to light—their great enemy, and their worst, sunlight—but they fade irregularly and unequally. Sir James Linton's



CARNARVON HARBOUR. (PENCIL SKETCH) 1871.



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assumption that the use of Indian red has caused the changes which he describes in certain drawings of the early English masters is unfounded. Indian red is a permanent and innocuous colour, but originally it was mixed with indigo, which is as fugitive as Indian red is durable. From the compound tint, originally a fine sombre purple grey, the blue has evaporated, and nothing but the raw crude red remains."

In the final paragraph of his letter Mr. Robinson strengthened his case, as he conceived, with a reference to certain Turner drawings. As this apparently crushing indictment was subsequently grappled with by a correspondent especially armed "to make reply," here is Mr. Robinson's statement: "It is unfortunate that this question was not raised a few weeks earlier, while the splendid series of Turner drawings was being exhibited at the Royal Academy. It would then have been easy to show in a striking and convincing manner the extraordinary and lamentable changes which have taken place in these admirable productions, from the long-continued exposure which they have for the most part undergone. As it is, I recommend all possessors of engraved drawings of Turner to confront them with fine impressions of engravings *made from them during Turner's lifetime*. In many instances they would find that entire passages, and those often the most exquisite and subtle, of Turner's original work in the drawings have entirely vanished from the paper, and that their record now exists only in the corresponding transcripts *in the engravings, which have suffered no alteration*."

It is right to explain that there was no passage emphasised in italics in Mr. Robinson's letter. The distinction has been added by the present transcriber, with an object that will appear in succeeding pages. At the juncture marked by Mr. Robinson's rejoinder to Sir James Linton, a leading article appeared in the *Times* which, after touching upon "the rival proposals of those who are anxious to extend the hours of opening the national museums," pronounced a general verdict in favour of Mr.

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Robinson's and Professor Church's dicta on the question of the deterioration suffered by water-colour drawings by exposure to light. "It is much to be desired," said the *Times*, "that the world might rest in the pleasant belief so strongly stated by the President of the Institute; but, unluckily, this cannot be. . . . That some drawings have stood the shocks of time does not prove that all have done so, or can; the beautiful condition, for example, of Mr. Taylor's 'Llanthony Abbey,' one of the gems of the recent Turner exhibition, does not prove that the Farnley Hall drawings, which hung in the same room with it at Burlington House, are not mere shadows of what they once were."

In returning to the charge, Sir James Linton "resolved not to be led away from the original subject of dispute," and was impelled to "fearlessly repeat that the earlier works have not faded, but on the contrary have deepened in tone. . . . That changes in some of them have taken place from exposure to damp, smoke, and direct sunlight, but chiefly from the use of Indian red, few people will question; but that those changes have taken place at the South Kensington Museum I calmly deny, for I have known the drawings since they were placed there." The reference to certain of the drawings at that time on exhibition at the galleries of the Royal Water-Colour Society, with the dates of their production and the comparison between the condition of the old work and the relatively new, albeit pertinent to the contention, may be passed over. Another object-lesson of a similar kind, but of weightier import, was impending. In reply to Mr. Robinson's recommendation to "all possessors of engraved drawings of Turner to confront them with fine impressions of engravings made from them during Turner's lifetime," Sir James Linton remarked that "to all experts and collectors of Turner engravings, and to those who know Turner's artistic life, this statement, which Mr. Robinson advances as a proof of the fading of Turner's drawings, will be received with surprise. It is notorious that no artist gave his engravers so much trouble and perplexity as Turner, for he was constantly

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making alterations from dark to light, and *vice versa*, accompanied with copious marginal notes."

With regard to another important matter, which had assumed prominence in the already heated controversy, Sir James Linton added: "In conclusion, I feel that Mr. Church has quite mistaken my meaning when he states that I said 'that Indian red caused chemical changes in some other colours.' As I cannot scientifically explain why the presence of Indian red is seen so frequently in large red blushes of sky, and why the other colours, particularly indigo, part company with it, I would respectfully ask him for a scientific explanation. Mr. Church says 'Indian red, light red, and Venetian red are not only themselves permanent, but they are without action on other pigments.' How does it happen that the greys which are made by the mixture of Indian red and blues, especially indigo, almost invariably turn 'rusty,' and in many instances leave the Indian red master of the field? Perhaps Mr. Church would also explain scientifically how it is that the other reds he mentioned do not become dominant, but on the contrary, as in those beautiful skies of the 'Changing of Pasture,' 'The Skylark,' and others, where indigo has been one of the ingredients, live in peace and harmony with their neighbours? That such is the truth after so many years' exposure to the 'full daylight' is beyond dispute."

Mr. Walter Severn, President of the Dudley Gallery Art Society, an unquestionable authority on the subject in dispute, followed on the side of the painters. Said he, "I feel certain that Sir J. Linton is right and Mr. Robinson is wrong as regards the deterioration of modern water-colour drawings. It is not surprising that some of the earlier ones painted slightly (or tinted) with badly made colours on poor paper should have faded. . . . Water-colour drawings, especially those of large size, are much more solidly painted than in the early days of the art. . . . Formerly only light washes were made with the softest of brushes, and the paper was not even properly prepared by tight-stretching,

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for fear of spoiling its surface by wetting. . . . Water-colours are less likely to undergo chemical changes than oils. The contents of old tubes or cakes which have become as hard as flint can be pounded in a mortar, and are as fresh and bright as ever; whereas old tubes of oil are often found to be hopelessly deteriorated."

Mr. G. Cavendish Bentinck, a well-known collector of water-colour drawings by the masters, and a connoisseur of the first rank, entered the arena at this juncture in straightforward support of the painter's cause. "Permit me to express a confident opinion," wrote he, "that this sweeping allegation [of Mr. Robinson's] is absolutely inaccurate. I have in my possession a large number of framed and glazed water-colour drawings which have been exposed to ordinary daylight for forty and even fifty years, and I am prepared to prove before any competent tribunal that not one of these has suffered deterioration in any particular whatever. It is, of course, perfectly true that innumerable water-colour drawings and pictures have become the mere ghosts of their former selves, but in most cases, where proper precautions for preservation have been taken, I maintain that the evil results are due to the artists themselves and to the defective colours and pigments of which they have made use. . . . If Messrs. Church and J. C. Robinson and any other critics will kindly favour me with a visit, I think I can persuade them that there are many exceptions to the arbitrary rules which Mr. Church has set forth, and that Sir J. D. Linton is not so greatly mistaken as your readers are led to suppose."

The history of this controversy is silent on the subject of the response to Mr. Cavendish Bentinck's invitation and challenge. It is not known whether Mr. Church, or Mr. Robinson, or "any other critics" called at No. 3 Grafton Street, with a view to being "persuaded." The next contributor to the argument was a writer who signed himself "An Artist," and who wanted to know how "we are to account for the fact of perfect stability in the polychromy which has endured externally on the temples of Egypt

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under scorching sunlight and other climatic influences for thousands of years?" Inasmuch as that was "another story," and was treated as such by the authority who considered that he was personally appealed to, we may pass it over and come to Mr. Ruskin, who interposed at this juncture, and wrote to the *Times* as follows:—

"SIR,—You are much to be thanked for your judicial close on the late controversy in your columns on the permanence of water-colour, but I wish it were the pride of the leading journal in Europe not to admit controversy to its pages at all, and to print on subjects admitting of doubt only the statements which narrow inquiry.

"The public may justly sympathise with Sir James Linton in the love of his art which beguiles him into the conviction of its immortality, and pardon Mr. Robinson the care for the future which provokes him into exaggeration of immediate loss.

"But, on the one hand, the patronage of water-colours must not be flattered by the idea that they enrich in flavour by keeping, like old wine; nor, on the other, is the entirely sound and authoritative protest of the Trustees of the National Gallery enforced in any wise by Mr. Robinson's fallacious alarm-cry respecting the contents of the gallery at Kensington.

"The Kensington Water-Colour Gallery is still one of the most delightful and instructive rooms in London; and the most delicate and precious drawing it contains, Turner's 'Hornby Castle from Tatham Church,' has sustained, during the last ten or twelve years, no greater harm than I might attribute my own instinct of, more to the failure of my old eyes than of Turner's colour.

"I may be permitted also to advise Mr. Robinson, in passing, that neither Mr. Fawkes nor I sent, at the Academy's request, our chosen drawings to London that we might learn from Mr. Robinson which were the best, or which we had taken the most care of.

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"The drawing which was exclusively so fortunate as to obtain Mr. Robinson's approbation (Llanthony) was, indeed, none of ours; and it certainly could not be faded, as there never had been any colour in it. I praised it highly for its grey effect in the first volume of 'Modern Painters'—bought it some thirty years ago, and parted with it afterwards because it possessed none of Turner's distinctive qualities, but was merely an effect of Copley Fielding's, better executed.

"But the general point on which the natural feeling of the public needs confirmation against troublesome gossip is the essential quality and value of a water-colour painting as a piece of polite art.

"Pure old water-colour painting, on pure old paper, made of honest old rags.

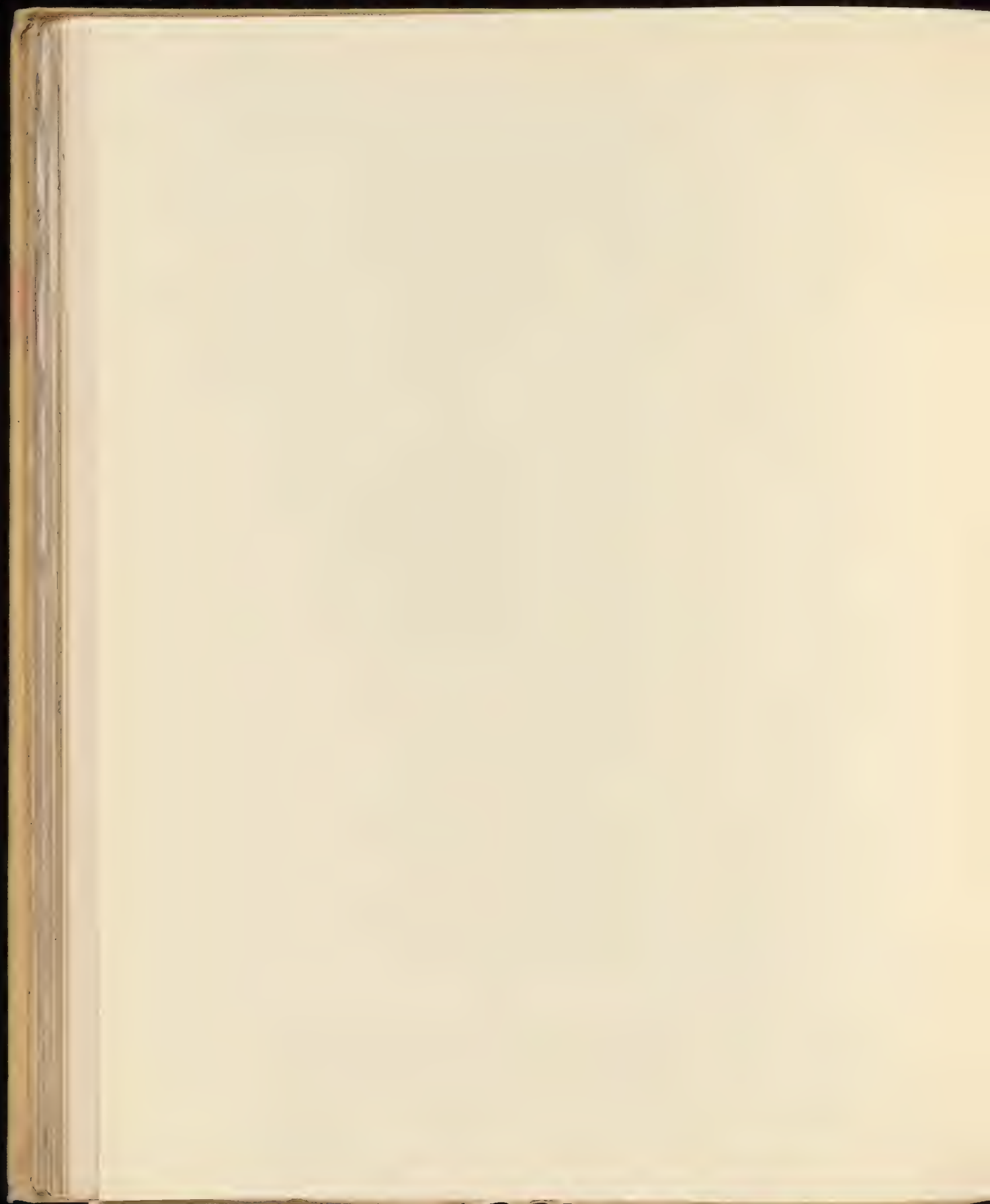
"There is no china painting, no glass painting, no tempera, no fresco, no oil, wax, varnish, or twenty-chimney power extract of everything painting, which can compare with the quiet and tender virtue of water-colour in its proper use and place. There is nothing that obeys the artist's hand so exquisitely; nothing that records the subtlest pleasures of sight so perfectly. All the splendours of the prism and the jewel are vulgar and few compared to the subdued blending of infinite opalescence in finely inlaid water-colour; and the repose of light obtainable by its transparent tints and absolutely right forms, to be rendered by practised use of its opaque ones, are beyond rivalry, even by the most skilful methods in other media.

"Properly taken care of—as a well-educated man takes care also of his books and furniture—a water-colour drawing is safe for centuries: out of direct sunlight, it will show no failing on your room wall till you need it no more; and even though, in the ordinary sense of property, it may seem less valuable to your heir, is it for your heir that you buy your horses or lay out your garden? We may wisely spend our money for true pleasures that will last our time, or last even a very little part of it; and the highest price of a drawing which contains in it the continuous delight



James G. G. G.

IN LEICESTERSHIRE. (WATERCOLOUR SKETCH.) 1872



James Orrock

of years cannot be thought extravagant as compared to that we are willing to give for a melody that expires in an hour.—I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

"BRANTWOOD, *April 12.*"

The material points in Mr. Church's letter, which followed, were these: "I repeat," he said (in reference to Sir J. D. Linton's assertion that the writer had mistaken his meaning), "that indigo,¹ alone or mingled with other pigments, fades by the action of light, leaving scarcely a grey 'ghost' behind. . . . But some greys, compounded of other pigments, do not alter, because their constituents are individually, as well as collectively, unalterable. Such, for example, is the grey made by mixing cobalt blue, light red, and yellow ochre. Even when rose-madder is substituted for light red, the change of hue which may occur does not take the direction of a foxy warmth, since the red element is the only one affected by exposure." In reference to another controversialist, Mr. Church said: "When Mr. Walter Severn affirms that water-colours are less likely to undergo chemical changes than oil-colours, he judiciously confines the assertion to cakes and tubes of pigments. But . . . we have to deal with washes and touches of colour distributed in films, often of extreme tenuity, upon and in a hygroscopic substance—namely, paper."

Mr. Frank Dillon, in his brief interposition, thought that Mr. J. C. Robinson had not sufficiently discriminated "between the different causes that have been at work in bringing about the injury that has undoubtedly accrued in certain cases." Mr. Ayscough Fawkes, an eminent collector of water-colour drawings,

¹ Mr. Emery Walker (of the firm of Messrs. Walker & Cockerell, engravers of the illustrations in the present work) writes to Mr. Orrock: "Referring to our conversation about the permanency of colours, you may be interested to know that William Morris, whose experience as a practical dyer was a very wide one, used to speak of indigo as one of the most permanent of colours."

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and the inheritor of a large number of first-class examples of the masters of the art, wrote as follows :—

"SIR,—Mr. Robinson, in his letter in your paper of the 26th of March, alludes to the faded condition of many of the Turner drawings exhibited in the Winter Exhibition at Burlington House. It is true he does not mention by name the drawings sent by me, but your critic stated early in January that some of my drawings were much faded. Now, Sir, I venture to dispute this statement. The large drawings I sent are ten years earlier in date than the catalogue made them out to be, the two upright Swiss scenes being signed and dated 1804, and they are painted in the very low key of colour that Turner made use of at that early date. I believe only Prussian blue, raw sienna, and light red were used in the drawings, and though, of course, they have mellowed with time, there are those living who remember them when they were exhibited in Grosvenor Place in my grandfather's time, and they state they are practically unaltered. The extreme delicacy of the details must lead any one to this conclusion, but people are so accustomed to the brilliancy of Turner's later drawings, and perhaps your critic does not know that Turner ever painted in a low tone.

"My pictures have been exposed on the walls at Farnley for more than sixty years, carefully preserved from the sun, but otherwise exposed to light.—Yours faithfully,

"AYSCOUGH FAWKES.

"FARNLEY HALL, OTLEY."

Thereupon, Mr. Robinson said he thought that Professor Church had supplied conclusive answers to most of "the points of objection to my former letters raised by your other correspondents," and "as regards the deterioration of the drawings at South Kensington from continued exposure to the light, I adhere in the fullest measure to my former statements." He also took occasion

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to state that "Turner collectors have mainly to thank me for rescuing from destruction the noblest series of that great artist's drawings he ever executed—the original bistre drawings for the *Liber Studiorum* prints." Finally, Mr. Robinson said:—

"I have certainly no pretension to teach Mr. Ruskin anything, but I object to unnecessary advice on his part. It was your own art-critic, not myself, who alluded to the 'Llanthony' and other faded drawings at the Academy Exhibition.

"I have always understood that Mr. Ruskin keeps his Turner drawings excluded from the light, either in portfolios or in frames protected by curtains or otherwise; if it be not so he will correct me. If, however, he does so preserve them, I would merely ask him if he keeps them in the dark to protect them from 'chemical change' or the fading action of daylight?"

In a further letter which opened with "Had Mr. J. C. Robinson appeased his wrath by simply reprimanding the South Kensington officials for neglect of duty in preventing the sun from shining on the water-colour drawings under their care, there would have been no controversy," Sir James Linton, after reciting his adversary's former allegation as to the "fading and waning away daily and hourly even" of the drawings in question, protests that "surely the testimony of even so many collectors as those who have already joined in the controversy ought to reassure the public against the effect of this false alarm." In referring to Mr. Robinson's pointed approval of Professor Church's "conclusive answers," Sir James Linton remarks, "I can only say that Professor Church has not answered my inquiries," and then repeats his question "how it comes that greys and other tones which are made partly with light red and Venetian red never turn rusty," &c., in proof of his reiterated contention.

"F.R.C.S." pointed out that "not only artists and dealers, but such authorities as Messrs. Christie could bear testimony to the disastrous effect of the scare which has been created." The principal and "original object" of this contributor to the controversy "was,"

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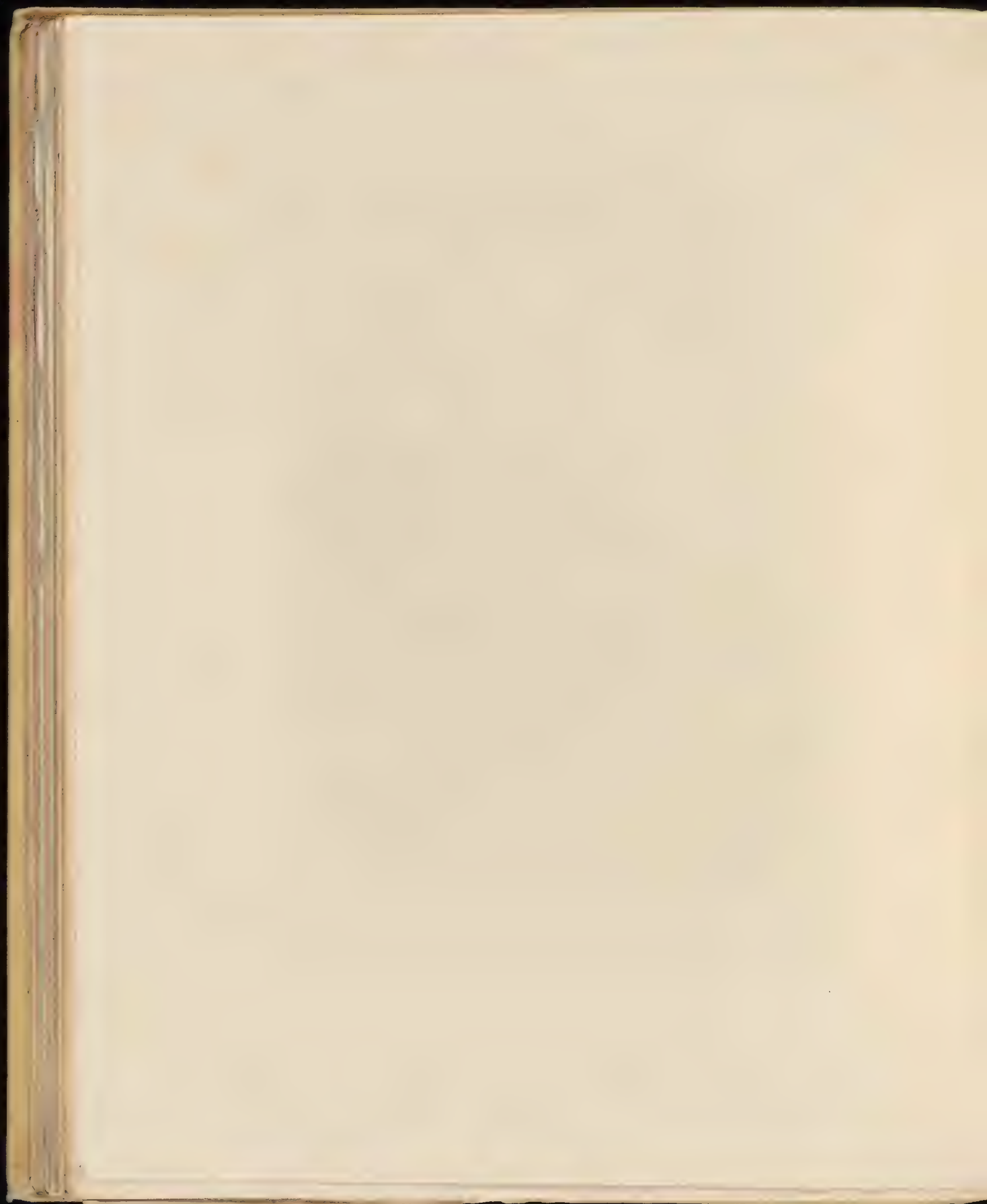
however, "to suggest that the alarm excited by Mr. Robinson and Professor Church should either be dispelled or shown to be well founded. Why should not an appeal be made to the Science and Art Department for an authoritative report on the South Kensington Collection, such report to include a description of the condition of the several works when acquired, and before they were placed in the galleries, and of the amount and character of the changes, if any, which any of them have undergone while being exhibited?"

Mr. Robinson in his next letter disclaimed any intention of making an "'attack' on the South Kensington officials, many of whom are my old friends and former colleagues," stated that "the truth is that the South Kensington managers have for a long time been misled by the sayings and doings of a succession of professional and other authorities," and expressed his approval of the suggestion of "'F.R.C.S.' that a departmental inquiry should be made into the question of the fading of drawings."

Then came Sir James Linton's announcement of the intention of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-Colours to hold in their council-room a small exhibition of works by deceased masters of the water-colour school, fine examples in an unexceptionable state of preservation. In the course of his characteristic comment on this announcement, Mr. Robinson said, "Let me advise Sir James Linton to obtain from Mr. Ruskin, or whoever may now possess them, and exhibit at the same time, the four drawings by Turner which that gentleman contributed to the Manchester Exhibition in 1857, and which according to him were utterly ruined and 'reduced to mere wrecks of what they were' by exposure to the light during that 'fatal year' only (see 'Arrows of the Chase,' 1880, section 4)."



The Beautiful Sitter.



CHAPTER XIX

The Test Exhibitions—Mr. Orrock's Collection at the Medical Society's *Conversazione*—The Collection at the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-Colours—Determining dates—Mr. Orrock the largest exhibitor—"A Windy Day"—Many years exposed to daylight, and no "Pale ghost of its former self"—Mr. Robinson protests against his treatment by Sir James Linton and Mr. Ruskin in the *Catalogue*—His ignored vindication in the *Nineteenth Century*—The attitude of the *Times*—Mr. Ruskin on Mr. Robinson's reference to "the four drawings in the Manchester Exhibition in 1857"—"Damp and sunlight"—The value and permanence of water-colour—Portraiture—Natural phenomena—Natural history—Cheerful and graceful room decoration—"The little Prout"—"No change in it since I was ten years old"—"The Lewis," "The Turner, No. 90"—The "Devonport" and "Salisbury"—With ordinary care drawings should be as bright when they are centuries old as they are to-day.

THE Exhibition of Water-Colour Drawings by Deceased Masters of the British School was opened in July 1886. In the mean time, what was described as "a considerable collection" of works in water-colour by William Hunt, David Cox, De Wint, and Barret, had been exhibited, on May 2nd, "by the kindness" of Mr. Orrock, at 11 Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, on the occasion of the annual *conversazione* of the Medical Society of London. This intermediate exhibition of drawings by three of "the pillars" and "the 'prentice pillar" of the water-colour art, as Mr. Orrock has designated them, had the effect of keeping alive the controversy whose history, so far, is recounted in the foregoing chapter, while it acted as a sort of *avant-courier*, or pilot balloon, to the greater exhibition which followed. The collection in the council-chamber of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-Colours was gathered together and submitted to the notice of the public as a multiform example of condition, a test of durability and freshness, a proof of the state of representative drawings by past—some of them long past—masters of the art. There were 168 drawings, the achievement

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of 25 painters. The dates of the various drawings, which were, however, in many instances untraceable, would be germane to the matter if an argument of a more fundamental character, which was shrewdly supplied by the catalogue, did not render their production unnecessary. In other words, the naming of the dates of the birth and death of each painter practically covered the ground for those who contended that, under the common conditions of exhibition, water-colours did not fade. The names, with the dates of birth and death (within brackets) are as follow:—

Austin, Samuel [—–1834]; Barret, George [1774–1842]; Bentinck, Lady Frederick [—–—]; Bonington, Richard Parkes [1801–1828]; Callcott, Sir Augustus Wall, *R.A.* [1779–1844]; Cattermole, George [1800–1840]; Chambers, George [1803–1840]; Cotman, John Sell [1782–1842]; Cox, David [1783–1859]; Cozens, John Robert [1752–1799]; Cristall, Joshua [1767–1847]; Dayes, Edward [—–1804]; De Wint, Peter [1784–1849]; De Witte, Emanuel [1607–1692]; Fielding, Copley [1787–1855]; Girtin, Thomas [1773–1802]; Hearne, Thomas [1744–1817]; Holland, James [1800–1870]; Hunt, William [1790–1864]; Lewis, John Frederick, *R.A.* [1805–1876]; Müller, William John [1812–1845]; Nicholson, Francis [1753–1844]; Prout, Samuel [1783–1852]; Turner, Joseph M. W., *R.A.* [1775–1851]; Varley, John [1778–1842].

Mr. Orrock was by far the largest contributor, his share of the drawings sent to the test exhibition being 72 out of a total of 168. Mr. A. T. Hollingsworth's contributions numbered 13, Mr. F. Nettlefold sent the like number, Dr. Dyce-Brown and Mr. H. Burton were responsible for 11 each, Mr. J. E. Sarson sent 7, Mr. (now Sir William) Agnew and Mr. George Lock respectively provided half-a-dozen, Mr. G. A. Musgrave contributed 5, Mr. Ruskin sent 4, Mr. Frank Dillon also sent 4, Mr. Arthur Severn added 3 to the collection, Lady Lindsay 2, and the Right Hon. G. Cavendish Bentinck, Mr. C. Morland Agnew, Mr. T. Gabriel, Mr. M. Huish, Mr. G. James, Mr. H. Pilleau, Mr. Collingwood

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Smith, Mr. J. Varley, Mr. C. Wertheimer, and Mr. J. W. Whympers 1 drawing each.

The painter most strongly and variously represented was David Cox (who died in 1859), 27 of his drawings appearing on the walls. John Varley (who died in 1842) was represented by 23 examples; William Hunt (who died in 1864) by 22; De Wint (who died in 1849) by 16; George Barret (who died in 1842) by 15; and Turner (who died in 1851) by a baker's dozen. "Plums and Blackberries," "The Shy Sitter," "Black Grapes and Strawberries," "Quinces," "The Wanderer," "The Pitcher-Girl," "Dead Pigeon" and "The Blessing," "Vase of Flowers, Apricots, Plums, &c.," which formed part of Mr. Orrock's contribution to the show, and "Pine, Melon, and Grapes," one of Mr. Hollingsworth's contributions, all brilliant examples—and several of them famous ones—of William Hunt's matchless work, had been in the Fine Art Exhibition, 1878-79. This, therefore, was not the first occasion of their being submitted, in a public gallery, to inspection under the daylight and other conditions inseparable from exposure in such a place. Mr. Ruskin's contributions consisted of three drawings by Turner and one by Samuel Prout. The Turners, namely "Devonport," "Scene in Savoy," and "Salisbury," had been exhibited at the Turner Exhibition held at the Fine Art Society in 1878. In a note appended to "A Windy Day" (by David Cox), Mr. J. W. Whympers, the exhibitor, says, "This drawing was purchased at the Exhibition of the Water-Colour Society, 1853. It hung for six years in the ordinary light of a London drawing-room, and subsequently it has been hanging for twenty-seven years in an extreme light uncovered. The indigo and other so-called fugitive colours appear to be unchanged under this severe trial." Sir James Linton says, in reference to this interesting piece of not insignificant history, "The picture is such a brilliant example of the durability of water-colour that, although I had decided not to publish the many verifications of the periods in which drawings in this gallery have been exposed to

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light, I have, at Mr. Whymper's request, made an exception in this case." The name of E. de Witte will be found in the foregoing list of painters. Mr. Collingwood Smith, R.W.S., explained in the catalogue that, "This drawing ('Dutch Church'), although not by a British painter, is exhibited as a powerful example of the durability of water-colour."

A copy of the catalogue, which was sent to Mr. Robinson, marked "under revision," led to an interchange of letters between that gentleman and Sir James Linton. Mr. Robinson had "to point out a serious omission in it. . . . The combined attack upon me in your preface and Mr. Ruskin's appendix I can very well leave for the appreciation of the public. . . . You have thought it right to reprint at the close of your catalogue the correspondence in the Press which was the cause of the exhibition; and you have, without apprising me of your intention, reprinted several of my letters on the subject. But you have omitted . . . my principal contribution to the controversy. I allude to my article on 'Light and Water-Colours' in the June number of the *Nineteenth Century Review*." Sir James Linton, in reply, said, "I must respectfully decline to enter into a private controversy on the matter contained in your letter. My preface is sufficiently explanatory of my action, and contains the substance of your sweeping attack on the permanency of water-colour drawings, and your imputation as to the personal motives of those who have ventured to controvert your assertions." Letter and reply were published, at Mr. Robinson's request, in the *Times*.

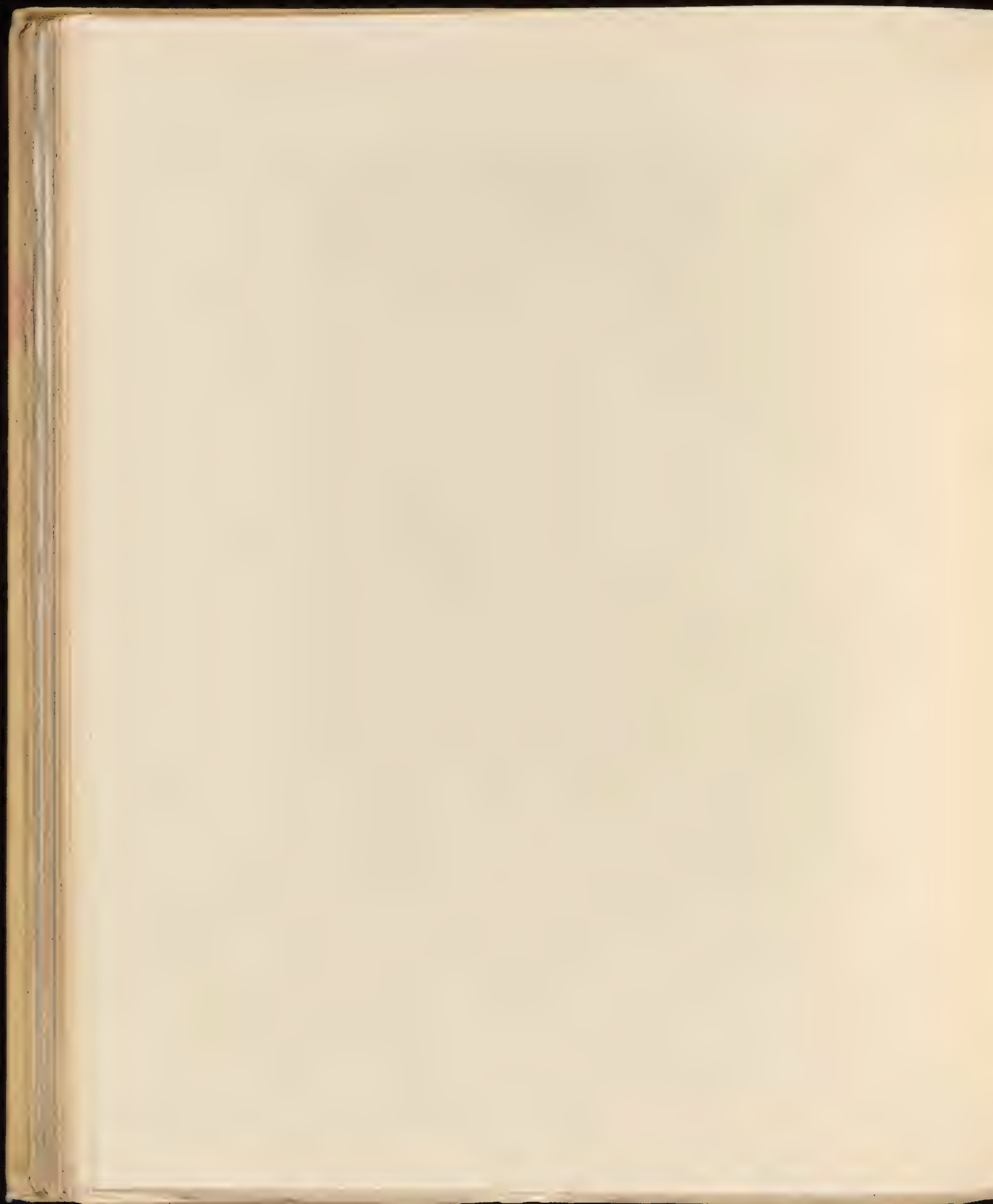
In the second paragraph of the above-mentioned preface, a presentation of the case which Mr. Robinson felt that he could "very well leave for the appreciation of the public," the President of the Institute of Painters in Water-Colours said: "But his (Mr. Robinson's) statements in evidence are so absurd in themselves in their relation to fact, that had they not been made by one who has hitherto enjoyed the reputation of being an expert in matters of art, they would certainly have been treated with the



Step. F. T. 1863

Step. F. T. 1863

"Off Guard."



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silence they deserve. Yet, as he has given these statements the greatest degree of publicity in his power, and, moreover, has persisted in them without any qualification of their absolute correctness, in spite of the numerous examples I have brought forward as ocular proofs to the contrary; and further, in evidence of this critic's ignorance of the matter he has so injudiciously trifled with, it was felt by the members of the Royal Institute, in common with others of the profession to which I have the honour to belong, that a representative gathering of the maligned Masters' works should be exhibited to the public. Thus the dispute is removed from the unsatisfactory region of empty words and opinions, and the Masters speak for themselves through their works with the irresistible force of fact." In the opinion of the *Times*, "Sir James Linton allowed himself to give way to a feeling of anger which was not at all required by the circumstances of the case." That was obviously not the opinion of the naturally roused water-colourists. There were, at any rate, artists, connoisseurs, and experts in water-colour who said "ay" to every syllable of the following "angry" passage, and who felt, from the point of view of sound knowledge and wide and familiar experience of the subject, that they were justified in that expression.

"Why Mr. J. C. Robinson should thus arrogate to himself the position of Mentor to the Public and Censor to the Profession is incomprehensible enough, for it must be obvious to all, from the examples displayed on the walls of this gallery, that his assertions are of the most misleading character, and that he possesses but the merest surface knowledge — as regards condition, processes, and materials — of the works he so rashly and absurdly condemns. Need I deny that 'water-colour artists shut their eyes to notorious facts which seem to tell against their art?' Surely a reckless insult such as this levelled promiscuously against the whole body of an honourable profession recoils on him who flings it, and calls for no reply."

The leading journal was unsparing in its denunciation of the

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appendix to the Catalogue. "As for Mr. Ruskin's appendix, all that need be said of it is that it is written in odious taste. Mr. Ruskin is indeed the Gladstone of art criticism." In order to complete the present digest, and at the same time afford readers who have hitherto been prevented from perusing Mr. Ruskin's warm-toned essay an opportunity of judging whether there is anything more to be said of it than is embodied in the foregoing verdict, the appendix is repeated, word for word, as follows :—

"The mingled spite and impertinence of Mr. Robinson's letter in the *Times* of the 14th instant release me from any further notice of his endeavours to destroy the most beautiful art in England: but to his request that Mr. Ruskin should exhibit 'the four drawings which that gentleman contributed to the Manchester Exhibition in 1857,' Mr. Ruskin replies that he never contributed one; neither to that nor to any other exhibition was ever drawing of Turner's sent by me, until I allowed my whole collection to be seen in Bond Street in 1878, when, if ever, Mr. Robinson's observations on the fading of Turners should have been communicated to the public. He had the right, there, to say what he chose, for I showed the drawings of my own free will; and he had the perfect materials for observation, for I showed drawings of every time and in every state. But he stained his ignorance with the worst discourtesy in debating what he supposed to be the defects in the noblest drawings ever made by Turner in the full strength of his life,—permitted by Mr. Fawkes, at the request of the Royal Academy, to be for the first time moved from the house in which, and for whose walls, they were made.

"The four drawings referred to in the Manchester Exhibition were exhibited by I know not whom, and there wrecked, as I wrote in the letter now reprinted in 'Arrows of the Chase,' by exposure at once to damp and sunlight. But the wrecks were still so lovely that I afterwards gave Mr. Colnaghi 130 guineas for the vignette of Troy, the same firm £760 for the drawing of Egglestone, and Messrs. Vokins £500 for that of Langhorne. The drawing which suffered

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most fatally was the Virginia Water, from which the rose colour in the sky literally disappeared; but the wonder was, under the treatment the drawings received at Manchester, that anything but soot stains on blank paper survived at all.

"I wrote at that time, energetically, to prevent further bleaching of Turner drawings; and, under Sir Charles Eastlake's authority, placed the National Gallery collection of Turner drawings in the cabinets, where they have remained safe to this day. I presented to Cambridge and Oxford the cabinets for the Turner drawings I gave them, and would have done the same for the Raphael drawings at Oxford the moment I entered on my first professorship; but the lovers of Raphael insisted on the continual exposure of the collection, and, to the best of my knowledge, I received no help by advice for its protection from Mr. Robinson, who drew up its catalogue.

"To whom here bidding a final requiem, I take Sir James Linton's leave to use the occasion of this pleasant display of old English drawings for a few general words on the value and permanence of water-colour as a means of national instruction.

"First in portraiture. All our popular taste has been depraved, and all our best feelings vulgarised, by the use of photography instead of miniature, or water-colour sketch. I find also numbers of students losing their lives in vain efforts to paint in oil and get into the Academy, when they might be earning an honourable and happy livelihood by water-colour portraiture, if the public were taught to recognise its value.

"Again, on the representation of natural phenomena, a water-colour sketch is—I do not say the readiest—it is the *only* way of rightly noting effects of light, colour, aerial relation, and cloud form rapidly passing, and it is the only method of giving truthful detail in landscape. Modern illustration by wood block, representing all effects of light as explosions, and all foliage as black and white, have half destroyed the ordinary observer's power of *seeing* nature, how much more of enjoying it!

"Again, in the illustration of natural history, it has been recog-

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nised by men of science that water-colour laid by hand was necessary for all scientific publications of the highest class. But it has never been enough felt by them that the living beauty, whether of flowers or animals, could only be represented by accomplished artists, and that the science of the future should have, not only Bewick, but John Lewis in its service, and train its rustic Wm. Hunt to the painting of the kingfisher and the butterfly.

"Lastly, for cheerful and graceful room decoration in domestic life, there is nothing comparable to water-colour drawings. The useless and expensive decorations of the upholsterer are merely an expression of pride; and as for fresco and arabesque—no one ever heard of anybody's honestly enjoying them—besides that they are an insult to the guests who can never hope to live in so fine a house. Oil pictures are very grand, but cumbrous, and often gloomy; while there is no parlour so small but it may be dignified—and no corner so dull but it may be lighted, by a pretty water-colour.

"Of the five examples in the present exhibition, the good-natured reader may be not displeased to have the precedents. The little Prout, No. 163, was the first drawing we ever possessed at Herne Hill—copied by my cousin Mary, as related in 'Præterita,' for delight of my father on his birthday. It has been an exhaustless pleasure to us ever since—always in the rooms we lived in—never protected from their quiet light—and I know no change in it since I was ten years old.

"The Lewis exhibited by Mr. Severn was bought by my father about 1840, and has been the pride of Herne Hill ever since. It was never protected from the light until very recently, and I recognise no enfeebling of any single line or touch.

"The Turner, No. 90, 'Scene in Savoy,' was Mr. Dillon's, exposed on his walls to ordinary daylight, and since frankly shown on mine. It is a very early drawing, certainly not much later than 1812 or 1814, and I cannot conceive of it as ever more beautiful than now.

"The Devonport and Salisbury were hung in the excellent light

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of Mr. Windus's drawing-room at Tottenham, and came from Tottenham to Denmark Hill, where before 1840,¹ though, like all the rest of our Turner drawings, protected by covers when no one was looking at them, they were always uncovered at breakfast time, and often, when we had visitors, during the day.

"These two drawings contain passages of colour as delicate and beautiful as can be seen by the master's hand. The sky of the Devonport I consider the loveliest in all my collection, and that of the Salisbury is unrivalled among those expressive of sunshine through rain. There is not a line that I know of, lost, in either work; there is not one that could be deepened with advantage, and I see no reason why, with ordinary care, the drawings should not be as bright, when they are centuries old, as they are to-day, after their first half-century of proper use and protection.

"JOHN RUSKIN.

"BRANTWOOD, *June 19th*, 1886."

An account of the final phase of the controversy, in which Mr. Orrock played a part of no small importance, is given in the next chapter.

¹ The Devonport was engraved by T. Jeavons in 1830, and the Salisbury by W. Radcliffe in 1830.

CHAPTER XX

Mr. Robinson again on the war-path—The alleged De Witte—Genuine or not, had been exposed to daylight before it came into the owner's possession forty-five years—And after—The committee to consider the question of the action of light on water-colours—"Why were Professor Church, Dr. Percy, and myself left out?"—A shot at Colonel Donnelly and South Kensington—The Colonel's reply—Mr. Ayscough Fawkes's account of the unchanged condition of Turner's drawings taken out of their frames—Mr. Robinson's unbelief—Mr. Ruskin quoted against himself—Redischarged "Arrows of the Chase"—Mr. Louis Fagan beside the question, and Mr. A. Goodall, R.W.S., on his father's engravings after Turner's pictures—Turner's common practice of working on the plates—Mr. Robinson and South Kensington again—Mr. Orrock enters the lists—His letter to the *Times*—History of some notable brilliant drawings—Their long exposure to daylight—Dr. Percy's historical collection—Mr. Robinson protests—Dr. Musgrave affords proof of the uncomparred brilliancy of his drawings after daylight exposure—Mr. Orrock's final letter—All the points advanced by Mr. Robinson met and dealt with—The end of the controversy.

IMMEDIATELY on his paying a visit to the Exhibition of Water-Colour Drawings by Deceased Masters of the British School, Mr. Robinson, with perhaps not altogether inexcusable warmth, resumed his combative pen. "Whether the stigma of 'ignorance,' to say nothing of 'impertinence' and 'spite,' which Sir James Linton and his ally, Mr. Ruskin, have sought to fix upon me in their catalogue should not more justly attach to those gentlemen themselves the public will judge." While he was satisfied that "there are not a few other inviting illustrations to be gleaned," Mr. Robinson contents himself with "one item of criticism." This relates to "a certain drawing described 'A Dutch Church,' by G. de Witte,¹ with the added announcement that 'this drawing (although not by a British painter) is exhibited as a powerful example of the

¹ The subject and the painter's name, whether the work in question be genuine or not, recall the following passage in Gilchrist's "Life of Etty": "Reading and thinking tranquilly—the sun shining on the picture of 'York-Minster Choir,' and my beautiful picture of De Witte's 'Interior of a Dutch Church'—made the morning pass speedily and happily away."

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durability of water-colours.'” Mr. Robinson affirms that the work is not from the hand of the great painter to whom it is ascribed, but . . . simply a modern copy—and a very bad copy—in water-colours from one of his oil-pictures. In reference to this charge Sir James Linton interposed with the reminder, “That is a matter between Mr. J. C. Robinson and the owner, an old and distinguished member of the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours, who states authoritatively that it had been exposed to daylight for forty-five years previous to its coming into his possession.” Mr. Collingwood Smith, the owner in question, said in reply to the challenge, “If Mr. Robinson had carefully examined my drawing by E. de Witte (not by G. de Witte as he calls him), he would have observed that it is painted on a sheet of very old paper. This is apparent below the upper inside edge of the frame. Mr. Robinson must know that I could not be expected to destroy a valuable drawing for the simple purpose of discovering a possible water-mark. Respecting the authenticity of the work, I beg to decline obscuring the main question by discussing that point, as the slur cast on this work does not disturb me.”

With regard to the announcement made by Colonel (now Sir J.) Donnelly, through the courtesy of the *Times*, “that the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education have appointed a committee consisting of Sir F. Leighton (chairman), Mr. (now Sir Edward) Poynter, Mr. (now Sir Alma) Tadema, Mr. Carl Haag, and Mr. Henry Wallis, named by the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours; Sir J. D. Linton and Mr. F. Dillon, by the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-Colours; together with Mr. Sidney Colvin of the British Museum, and Mr. Armstrong of this department, to consider the question of the action of light on paintings in water-colours,” Mr. Robinson was impelled to declare that “Colonel Donnelly’s communication seems to indicate that the authorities of South Kensington Museum have made common cause with these gentlemen” (namely, “Sir James Linton and his ally, Mr. Ruskin,” and “practising water-colour artists” generally), and added that

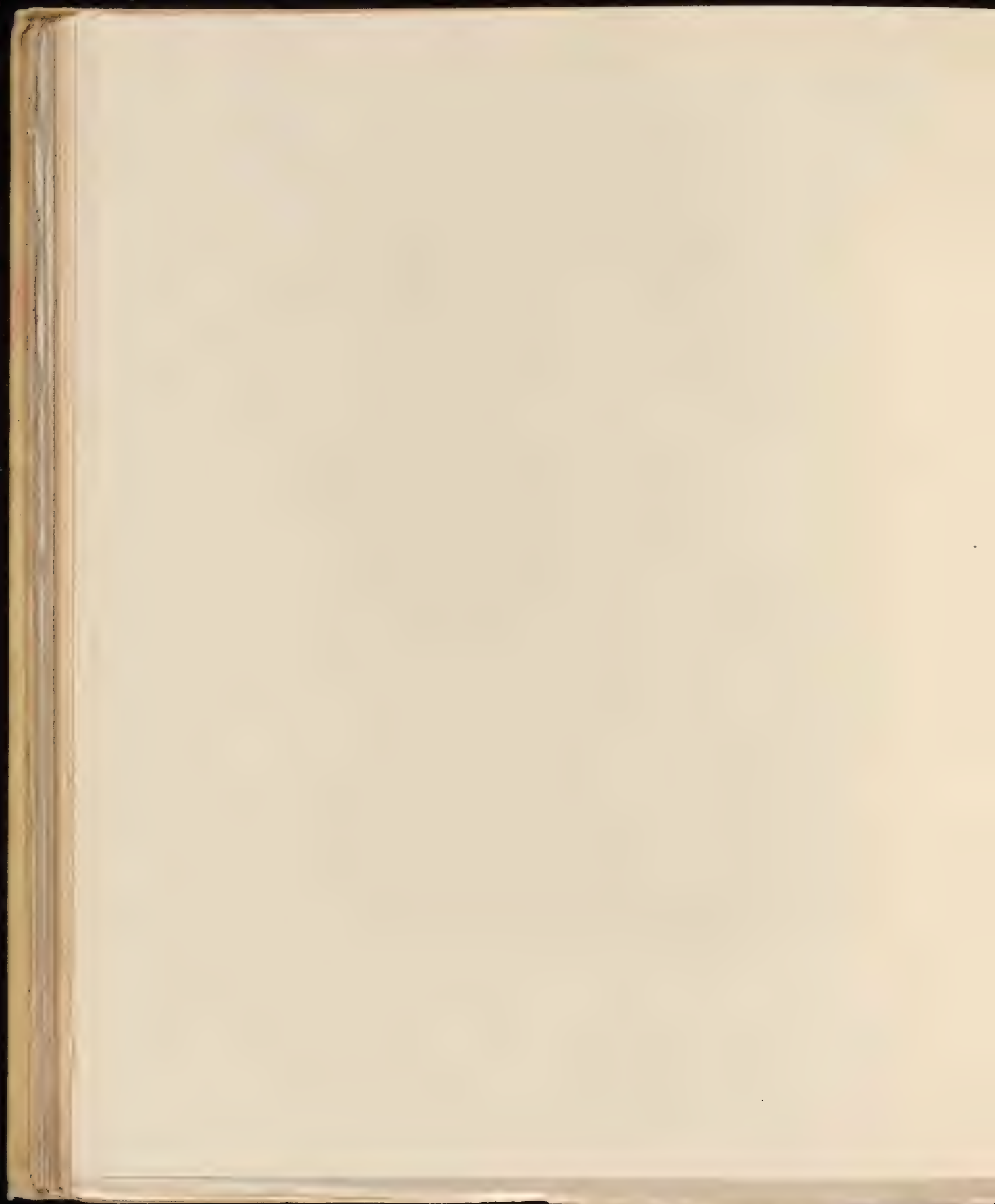
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"the public will, I apprehend, be under the impression that it is a feeble endeavour to stave off or render abortive a highly necessary inquiry and to obscure the truth." Mr. Robinson was also pleased to remark that "It will perhaps be asked why were not Professor Church, Dr. Percy, and myself invited to join this commission?" Finally, Mr. Robinson discharged the following shot at Colonel Donnelly, and at the South Kensington authorities: "I have paid but one visit to the museum of late, and that shortly before leaving town. I then noticed two remarkable things—first, that measures had at last been taken to shield the drawings from the direct sunlight which was formerly wont to impinge upon them; secondly, as I have already indicated, that these drawings, glaring and unmistakable evidences of former neglect as they are, had been carefully removed." In reply, Colonel Donnelly said simply, "I have to request that you will allow me to state that the measures now taken to protect the pictures from the direct action of sunlight are precisely the same as have been employed for many years past—in fact, since the pictures have been in these galleries. The pictures which have been removed, a few at a time, for careful inspection have been replaced on the walls as soon as that inspection was complete."

At this juncture Mr. Ayscough Fawkes, the possessor of a name inseparable from one of the most interesting and important chapters in the life of Turner, the great Master in Water-Colours, submitted a brief but significant contribution to the original controversy, making for the durability side of the question. He wrote: "I only wish your correspondent Mr. Robinson had been present in this house during the last few days, that he might have seen my Turner drawings taken out of their frames, in which Turner placed them. They are all framed close without a margin, and in many instances a considerable piece of the drawing is concealed by the frame. In no one instance is there any alteration in colour where the drawing is so concealed, which I think is proof absolute that there is no alteration in the drawing from the action of light. In one instance there is one inch of the drawing so concealed."



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It will be necessary, as with other matters, to refer again to Mr. Robinson's reply in the summary of the points discussed and the review of the case. For the present be it simply noted that "I am sorry indeed that I cannot agree with Mr. Fawkes in regard to the state of conservation of his beautiful Turner drawings" were the opening terms of Mr. Robinson's reply. The general observations which follow this serene dismissal of Mr. Fawkes's statement of a matter of fact and evidence do not call for recapitulation, inasmuch as they consist essentially of a restatement of the writer's contentions and warnings, applied in this instance more especially to Turner's "exquisite water-colour pictures," "waning and fading off the paper at a pace which threatens their ultimate extinction as works of art."

Then Mr. Robinson quotes Mr. Ruskin respecting "Turner's Great Yorkshire series," to which he (Mr. Robinson) believes Mr. Fawkes's Turner drawings mainly belong, as follows: "For instance, the great Yorkshire series is, generally speaking, merely the wreck of what it once was . . . the cloud forms which have disappeared from these drawings may be seen in the engravings." This is a citation from Mr. Ruskin's "Arrows of the Chase," a collection of scattered letters, published chiefly in the daily newspapers, 1840-1880, vol. i. p. 130.

In reference to one of the, as he alleges, more or less damaged works, Mr. Robinson takes upon himself to speak from personal knowledge and experience. "This is the famous 'Hornby Castle' drawing. Now, this once glorious work has hung for the last thirty years exposed to the full glare of a violent top light. The trial has doubtless been much more searching and severe than that which Mr. Fawkes's drawings have undergone. Consequently this example has suffered to a far greater extent. It has, indeed, since it became national property, been reduced from a condition of pristine perfection and surpassing brilliancy to the condition of a mere faded and disjointed wreck. . . . There is, I believe, a fine engraving of this drawing; let those who are so minded take this print and compare

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it with the original. I have not done so myself, but I confidently predict that not only 'cloud forms' but infinite details of earth and sky, trees and distant hills, would now be sought for in vain in the drawing."

In a redischarged flight of certain "Arrows of the Chase" (already referred to and described) Mr. Robinson quoted, first, from vol. i. p. 121: "Their delicate tones of colour would be equally destroyed by continuous exposure to the light, or to smoke and dust. Drawings of a valuable character, when thus destructible, are in European museums hardly accessible to the general public. But there is no need for this seclusion. They should be enclosed each in a light wooden frame, under a glass, the surface of which a raised mount should prevent them from touching. These frames should slide into cases, containing about twelve drawings each, which would be portable to any part of the room where they were to be seen. I have long kept my own smaller drawings in this manner."

The point manifestly most material to the argument in Mr. Robinson's next extract (vol. i. p. 129) was Mr. Ruskin's statement that "among the works of Turner I am prepared to name an example in which, the frame having protected a portion while the rest was exposed, the covered portion is still rich and lovely in colours, while the exposed spaces are reduced in some parts nearly to white paper, and the colour in general to a dull brown."

"That water-colours are not injured by darkness (vol. i. p. 130) is also sufficiently proved by the exquisite preservation of the missal paintings when the books containing them have been little used. . . . 'Will you have your Turner drawings to look at when you are at leisure in a comfortable room, under such limitations as will preserve them to you for ever, or will you make an amusing exhibition of them . . . for children and nursery maids, dry your wet coats by them, and shake off the dust from your feet upon them, for a score or two of years, and then send them to the waste-paper merchant?'" Vol. i. p. 149: "They are (Mr. Ruskin's own

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Turner drawings), when in use, perfectly secure from dust and all other sources of injury; slide, when done with, into portable cabinets; are never exposed to light but when they are being really looked at.

"Thus taken care of and thus shown, the drawings may be a quite priceless possession to the people of England for the next five centuries; whereas those exhibited in the Manchester Exhibition (1857) were virtually destroyed in that single summer. There is not one of them but it is the mere wreck of what it was. I do not choose to name destroyed drawings in the possession of others, but I will name the vignette of the Plains of Troy in my own, which had half the sky baked out of it in that fatal year, and the three drawings of Richmond (Yorkshire), Egglestone Abbey, and Langhorne Castle, which have had, by former exposure to light, their rose colours entirely destroyed, and half of their blues, leaving nothing safe but the browns.

"I do not think it necessary to repeat my former statements respecting the injurious power of light on certain pigments rapidly and on all eventually (p. 150). I will, however, myself undertake to show from my own collection a water-colour from the eleventh century absolutely as fresh as when it was laid, having been guarded from light; and water-colour burnt by sunlight into a mere dirty stain on the paper, in a year, with the matched piece from which it was cut beside it."

Finally Mr. Robinson quotes (vol. i. p. 163): "I must still repeat that no water-colour work of value should ever be constantly exposed to light, or even the air of a crowded metropolis, least of all to gaslight or its fumes."

Mr. Louis Fagan's letter calling "attention to the fact that in 1858 a collection of drawings was exhibited in the King's Library, British Museum," amongst which there "was one by Francia, executed with the silver point and heightened with white, in which, after it had hung a short time, the high lights turned black," together with Mr. Frank Dillon's remarks on Mr. Fagan's

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letter, had no material bearing on the main question. But the letter of Mr. Edward A. Goodall, R.W.S., undoubtedly had.

"I may be allowed, I think," writes Mr. Goodall, "to speak with some authority, as my father was engaged the greater part of his life on Turner's work, in which for some years I assisted him.

"Mr. Robinson alleges that, in order to appreciate Turner, we should confront the engraving with Turner's drawing presented by Mr. Sheepshanks to the South Kensington Museum, and confidently predicts 'that not only cloud forms, but infinite details of earth and sky, trees and distant hills, would now be sought for in vain in the drawing,' doubtless for the simple reason they were probably never there.

"My father, in submitting his plates for Mr. Turner's remarks, which he usually did in an early stage of the engraving, frequently observed Mr. Turner, in touching on the proofs, introduce new effects—clouds and figures—which were never in the original."¹

Mr. Goodall adds, in his capacity as an experienced painter in that medium:—

"I can conceive no more conclusive testimony to the durability of water-colour art than Mr. Fawkes's letter."

The final paragraph of Mr. Robinson's next letter, which otherwise amounted to little more than a recapitulation of his former observations, runs thus:—

"As to the withdrawal of the most conspicuous faded drawings from exhibition at South Kensington, coincident with the display of well-preserved specimens at the Institute of Water-Colour Painters, Colonel Donnelly does not deny the fact. Whatever may have been the motive of the withdrawal of these specimens, it has at any rate deprived the public of the chance of making

¹ "He also altered the drawings from his engravings to suit the public taste. Sometimes, it is said, when an engraver came with a plate to be touched, he would take a piece of chalk (or whiting) in his right hand and black in his left, with the inquiry, 'Which will you have it done with?' The engraver having chosen either black or white, according as he thought his plate weak or heavy, the other piece of chalk would be thrown down, and the plate reconstructed with the added lights or darks in ten minutes."—*Life of J. M. W. Turner, R.A.*, by Walter Thornbury (Chatto & Windus).

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comparisons and forming their own conclusions in this matter, which they could not do by merely inspecting what have been aptly described as the packed and picked specimens in the Piccadilly show."

Hereupon Mr. Orrock entered the lists, and delivered the following attack:—

"As I have the honour of being one of the chief contributors to the loan exhibition of water-colour drawings now being held in the council-room of the Royal Institute, Piccadilly, and being a member of the Institute, as well as a collector and connoisseur, I shall feel much obliged if you can spare me space for a few remarks concerning the history of several of those works which I have lent at the request of the president and council of the society.

"I need hardly say that, in common with those who take a deep interest in the national art of water-colour painting, I have watched with interest the controversy between Sir J. D. Linton and Mr. J. C. Robinson, and as I can personally throw a great amount of light (as I have daylight) on those selected specimens of the masters, I feel it my duty to do so, not so much with a hope of satisfying Mr. Robinson as with the wish to reassure the lovers of the water-colour art that what he has said is fallacious.

"In the first place, I have made it my pleasant duty to select specimens of the masters, not so much for their historical value as for their intrinsic merits, which entitle them to a history; and I have made it a study also to obtain those specimens in the best state of preservation. Nos. 60 and 66, by G. Barret, for instance, were purchased by me about six years ago, and they were then in their original frames, which the lady who owned them had had made for them when they were painted about fifty years ago. They had always been exposed to the daylight, but were most carefully preserved from smoke and dust, the glasses having been securely pasted round the edges of the back boards. No. 137, D. Cox, was purchased by the late F. W. Topham, member of the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours, and hung in that artist's house in its original frame, and exposed to the daylight. No. 53, W. Hunt,

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was painted for the late Mr. Wade, Dean Street, Soho, and has never been out of a frame since it was painted. Nos. 45, 47, and 49 belonged to Mr. Sibbeth, and were purchased at his sale. They have been exposed in frames since Hunt painted them. No. 55 was purchased a few years ago from Professor Ruskin, and I have a letter from the professor stating that it was painted for his father. It was in the original frame when I bought it. I could mention many other drawings in my collection which I know to have been exposed to the full daylight for more than thirty years. I think, however, even with those few I have named, it has been clearly proved that Mr. J. C. Robinson's statement is incorrect. The second part of my argument will, I think, be also freely admitted by all unprejudiced judges, and Dr. Percy's testimony shall be the proof. Personally I have the pleasure of Dr. Percy's acquaintance, and I have also had the pleasure and instruction of looking through his matchless historical collection of English water-colour drawings under his guidance and tuition. Among the hundreds, however, which I saw and examined, I did not see what I could call a brilliant or full-coloured drawing, one which George Barret calls in his 'Letters' (British Museum) a painted, not a tinted drawing. Of course, Dr. Percy's collection is almost exclusively composed of early works done in greys and neutral tones, and afterwards tinted like a coloured print. This early mode of work is clearly described in Barret's book already mentioned. I contend, therefore, that those drawings, in consequence of the groundwork not being in outline on white paper, but a picture painted first in dull colours, and heightened afterwards with more brilliant hues, appear faded and changed, whereas those brilliant pigments have in reality not faded, but been *absorbed* into the dull grey ground. Dr. Percy, I observe, thinks that even in his drawings the indigo here and there has disappeared. If this be so, and other drawings in his valuable collection have changed in other respects, it cannot be from exposure to light, daylight, or sunlight. No; for Dr. Percy's drawings are most carefully packed up in cases, and each case or folio

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has its place in a large and handsome cabinet under lock and key. I do not think, moreover, that even among so great a collection as Dr. Percy's even a few have ever been framed, for they nearly all belong to a period when drawings were of little commercial value, and were therefore kept in portfolios.

"My collection is composed altogether of brilliantly painted drawings, which for the most part have, in consequence of their beauty and completeness, been thought worthy to be framed, and have also been exposed to the daylight. The painters of those drawings have all been dead longer than the allotted span of time given by Mr. Robinson, viz. thirty years, and yet those specimens, picked if you will, are as brilliant and living as any works of yesterday. The Hunts, Coxes, Barrets, and De Wints, which I have lent to the Institute exhibition, will answer for themselves. They must be as bright as they were half a century ago, because they have no rivals to-day. If Dr. Percy will kindly consent to show his drawings, which have been excluded from the daylight in double cases, against mine, which have always been in the daylight, the public, I know, will conclude that the case is reversed, and that Dr. Percy's candid testimony has lost Mr. Robinson his case.

"In conclusion, instead of asking scientists how drawings become faded, discoloured, and mildewed, I would respectfully ask them how it is that, in spite of long exposure to the daylight, they are much more brilliant than those so-called folio drawings which have rarely seen the light at all. In a word, the public ought reasonably to ask how it is that drawings even when exposed to ordinary daylight do not fade and become 'the ghosts of their former selves.'"

In Mr. Robinson's reply, which Mr. Orrock dealt with—as will be observed in his cited letter—point by point, he was impelled to declare that "I have never 'allotted the span of thirty years' as the limit of existence of water-colour drawings, and the endeavour to fasten upon me the onus of so foolish an assertion is a piece of sharp practice which, I apprehend, will be easily seen through and need be no further commented on." Dr. Musgrave, F.R.C.S., a

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well-known collector, and "one of the exhibitors at the R. W. Institute," interposed with a protest against "having my drawings condemned by Mr. Robinson in this off-hand way." Dr. Musgrave further added his testimony to that of Sir James Linton, Mr. Orrock, and their phalanx.

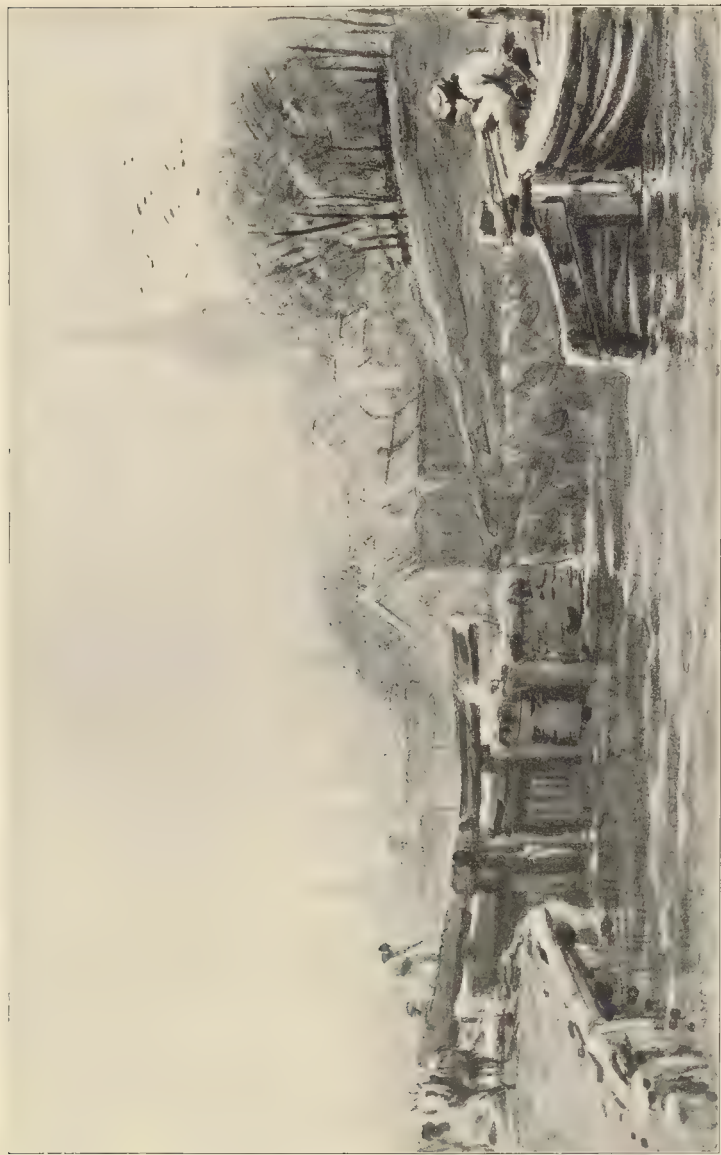
"On the back of each of the seven drawings which I sent, I wrote the number of years during which it had been continually exposed to light. . . . I am glad to say that I have it in my power to produce corroborative testimony that my Hunts, Copley Fielding, De Wint, Cox, and others have been hung in the light of an ordinary town or country drawing-room for nearly fifty years, and are, as far as my judgment can be relied on, in the same condition as when they were first painted." Dr. Musgrave finally, in summing up another and obvious part of the case, put this question: "Why, then, because Mr. Robinson, with the best intention, wants to pull down the blinds of South Kensington, should the public be scared by this bleaching bogey, who, according to him, must have been exceedingly busy in his evil work since the days of the Gillott, Quilter, Solly, and Windus sales?"

Mr. Orrock's second letter, with the publication of which the controversy practically concluded, was as follows:—

"I am much obliged to Mr. J. C. Robinson for the honour he has done me in noticing my letter of August 10, and if you can spare me space I will endeavour to answer it.

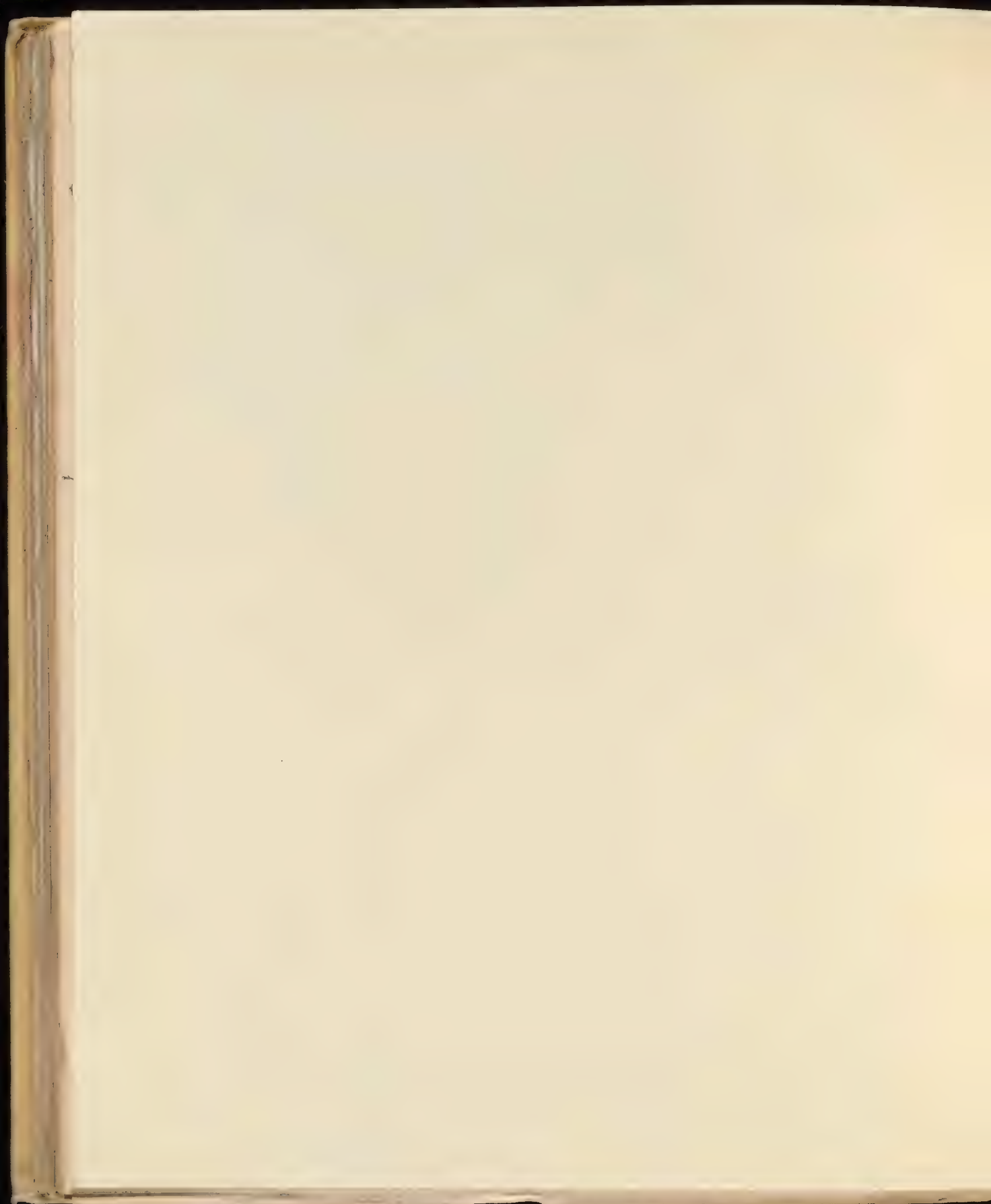
"To begin with, I regret that Mr. Robinson should feel that my fellow-craftsmen and I have persistently misrepresented what he had written, and he particularly grieves over the statement of the allotted space of thirty years as the limit of existence of water-colour drawings.

"The most direct answer I can give as to the truth of this assertion is to quote Mr. Robinson's own words. In his letter to the *Times* of March 11 he states: 'At the South Kensington Museum an important collection of English water-colour drawings has been continuously exhibited in the full daylight for twenty or



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OLD LOCK AND ST. MARY'S CHURCH, LEICESTER. (WATER-COLOUR SKETCH) 1872.



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thirty years past, and I have no hesitation in saying that by the mere fact of such exposure all these drawings have been more or less irrevocably injured, and that in many cases the specimens are now, as it were, the pale ghosts of their former selves. These treasures, then, have sufficed for the delectation of one generation only, and we ourselves have practically used them up.' Again, in his letter of March 26 he says: 'I reaffirm in the strongest manner that the drawings I have alluded to at South Kensington are day by day perishing from undue exposure to the light. Further, I say that every full-coloured water-colour drawing framed and exposed to the light begins to fade and change—to die, in fact, from the very moment it is exposed.' Sir J. D. Linton clearly disproved this assertion by naming as specimens of the most brilliant drawings the 'Windsor' and 'Windermere' by David Cox, 'Nottingham' by De Wint, several Hunt drawings, and many more at the Kensington Museum which have been hanging there for 'twenty or thirty years in the full daylight.' I can confirm Sir James Linton's statement by saying that those drawings and numbers more are as bright and living as any in my own collection.

"On the other hand, as to portfolio drawings being better preserved than framed ones, I would instance the Varleys I lent to the Institute Exhibition. Those drawings belonged to a collector named Davis, who lived in Cheshire. They were always, while in his possession, kept in a portfolio, and I framed them about three years ago, when I bought them at Christie's, and although brilliant and late drawings, they are not more so than those in my collection which have always been in frames. I calmly deny, then, that we have persistently misrepresented Mr. Robinson's statements, and therefore the 'onus of so foolish an assertion' rests clearly on himself.

"Mr. Robinson threatens me with being demolished by Dr. Percy. What for? I simply said Dr. Percy was a kind and courteous gentleman, who possessed, perhaps, the most complete historical collection of English water-colour drawings, and that they were beautifully arranged and kept in boxes. I also said I saw no

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modern or painted drawings there by the masters, but tinted early works done at the period when greys and neutral colours were used to forward the picture before the bright colours were added. As Mr. Robinson has clearly not studied the different modes and methods of our great English water-colour school, I would respectfully direct his attention to George Barret's letters, and he will be told by that master that the grey grounds so absorbed or swallowed up the brilliant colours which were placed on them that many people thought the drawings had faded. This is precisely what Mr. Robinson thinks to-day. Barret will also tell him that water-colour drawings are most lasting, which he proves from one of his father's having lasted for seventy years without any change whatever.

"I cannot see why I should be demolished by Dr. Percy. I saw no faded drawings there and no bright ones, but drawings for the most part of great interest, belonging, it is true, to the iron age, when so much Indian red was used. I saw none of the golden age or painting age which Barret speaks of.

"Mr. Robinson says, 'If Dr. Percy should think it worth while he will relieve him' (that is, Mr. R.) 'from the task of demolishing' me; and this because I ventured to say that my drawings were as bright in their frames as Dr. Percy's were in their boxes. Yes, they are brighter than Dr. Percy's, a good deal brighter, I think. There is an element of drollery in Mr. Robinson's sparing himself the task of chastising me. Before he undertakes this task, however, I should advise him to add a little knowledge of the water-colour school to his experience in bric-à-brac. I despise as much as any one to note trifling errors, but when a 'glossary connoisseur' persists in spelling Barret's name with two t's (three times) I am forced to conclude that that gentleman's knowledge of the sign-manual of the masters is, to say the least, limited. Signatures with connoisseurs are always part of their knowledge, and from this apparently trivial error the discerners can at once see that Barret's works are not familiar to Mr. Robinson.



Mrs. Heugh.



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“‘As to the well-preserved drawings in Mr. Orrock’s own possession, I may once for all say that I attach very little weight to mere assertions unsupported by positive evidence as to the conditions under which drawings have been preserved in former periods.’ What evidence would satisfy Mr. Robinson’s sceptical mind? Would this be powerful enough? Mr. Barfoot, of Leicester, writes about a noted Hunt drawing which I have in my collection, called ‘The Blessing’: ‘How rapidly time passes. It was September 24, 1864, when I bought “The Blessing,” and I fancy that the colour has not changed, whatever the critics may say.’ I remember Mr. Barfoot buying the drawing, and I can testify to its being as bright as when it came into Mr. Barfoot’s hands. I have had it in my collection about ten years, where it has been hanging up exposed to the full daylight. Hunt painted it about sixty years ago.

“Does Mr. Robinson expect collectors to ask for space in the *Times* simply to multiply cases of evidence in the vain hope of satisfying a mind which seems impervious? Were it possible to impress this mind, one wonders how many hundreds or thousands of well-kept framed drawings would be needed for the operation. Let him state the number, however, and I for one believe the drawings could be got and the matter settled.

“‘Mr. Orrock has gathered his drawings together mainly within the last few years, from all manner of sources, and anything like a correct record of their previous chances and changes, except, perhaps, in isolated instances, manifestly could not be ascertained.’

“Precisely, Mr. Orrock’s collection as to exact history is like every collection under the sun. But how about isolated cases? How many, again, would be required for that operation just spoken of?

“With characteristic tenacity Mr. Robinson dashes at a drawing which came from Mr. Ruskin, ‘who, as we all know, has always kept his drawings in the dark.’ Sir James Linton and I visited

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Mr. Ruskin at Brantwood last winter, and we of course saw his beautiful drawings. Would it surprise Mr. Robinson to hear that not one drawing was covered up, but all were hanging on the walls in full daylight? Is this evidence worth anything?

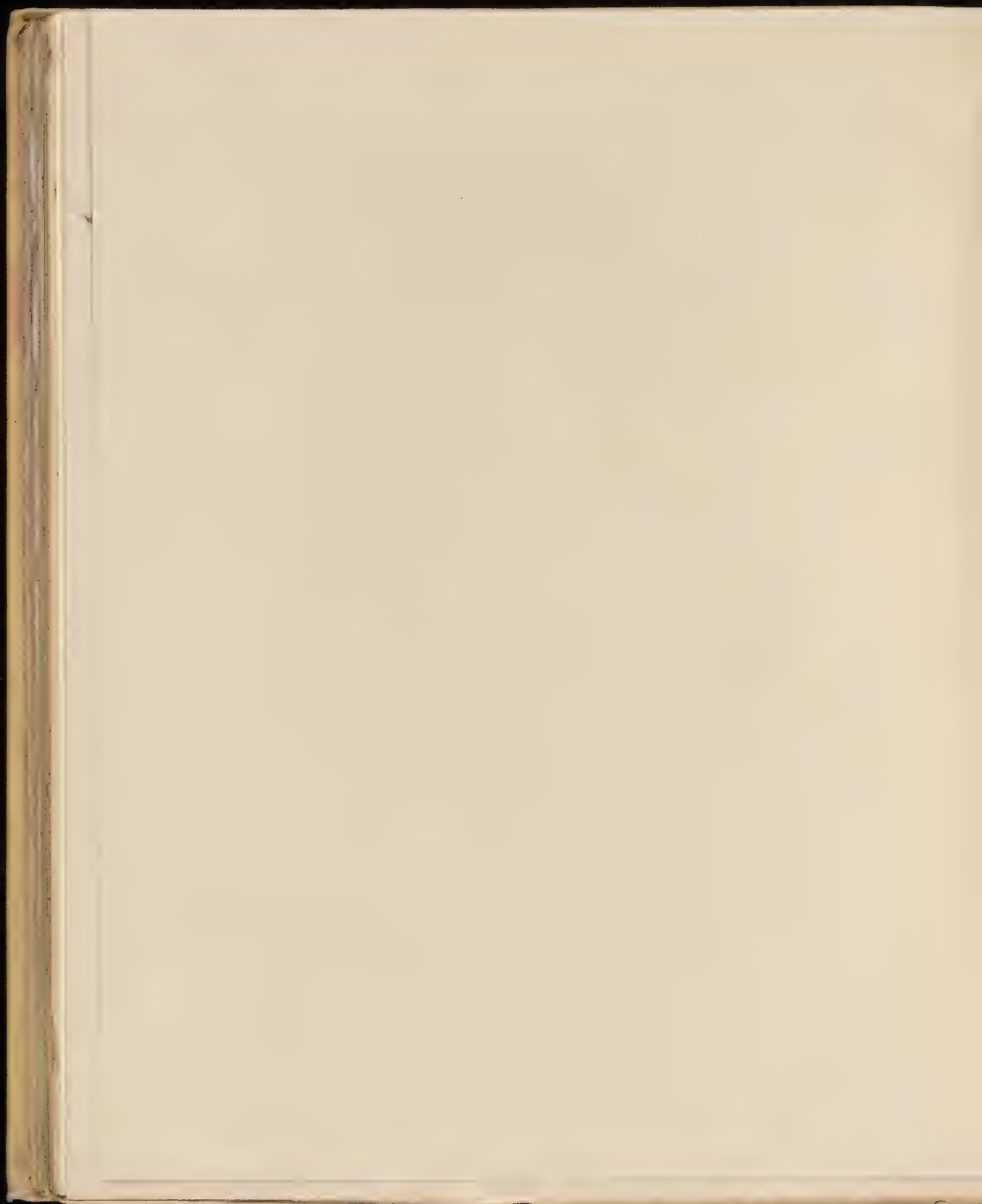
“‘Mr. Orrock makes a great ado about his fine drawings by Barret.’ I have many Barrets, all fine, but I have made no ado about them. I said the two drawings lent to the Institute, ‘Morning’ and ‘Evening,’ were most carefully framed and preserved by a lady (who lived at Hampton Court). I brought them forward as evidence against Mr. Robinson’s false statements as to framed drawings; and now he says I make a great ado about them. This is his way of demolishing my arguments.

“‘Mr. Orrock knows, or ought to know, that perhaps not one drawing in twenty by that admirable artist (Barret) is now to be found in other than a woefully faded condition.’ I ought to know certainly, and do know, that not one Barret in twenty, or one anything in art in twenty, is worth having. I do know and avoid bad-conditioned things, and for more than forty years I have had great delight in selecting the gems of the purest water-colour, and leaving those which were off colour. I do know also and will tell Mr. Robinson that the nineteen out of the twenty have not faded as he imagines from exposure to light, but have become foxy from the presence of Indian red. When he studies Barret’s works a little more, *including his signature*, he will find out the truth of this statement.

“‘A fair and honest procedure, by the way, would have been to have placed one or more of these faded Barrets side by side in the Piccadilly exhibition.’ Our object, however, was to show sound specimens, not damaged ones. Cracked and painted china pots, for instance, are common enough, but fine, perfect specimens are of course always rare. We had one object in view—viz., to refute Mr. Robinson’s attack—and brilliant framed drawings were, therefore, exhibited. The public and collectors know how matters stand, and we invite Mr. Robinson, as he proposes, to expose our tactics.



A Portrait.



James Orrock

Ours are fair play and no favour. His are to pose as a righteous and conscientious keeper of the nation's treasures, no matter at what sacrifice.

"It certainly is amusing to read Mr. Robinson's remarks on the age of restoration as applied to water-colours. He would try to make the halt, the ignorant, and blind believe that in art water-colours alone are evanescent and are continually being repainted. Unscrupulous dealers, he says, for the most part do this. Have not oil-paintings now and then been also touched up and bodily repainted? Have Mr. Robinson's favourite wares, Persian, majolica, Spanish, &c., never been touched up? If Mr. Robinson will be kind, and promise not to change his mind and demolish me himself, I will show him in my hall in Bedford Square an oil-picture by Richard Wilson which came from his collection, and which has been scoured and otherwise bedevilled; but it still has the redeeming quality of showing some of the master's power, and this was my reason for buying it. The public, Mr. Robinson posingly says, 'ought to be enlightened about this age of restoration in Turners, De Wints, Barrets, and Copley Fieldings; for if this kind of work goes on as it has commenced, intending purchasers must scrutinise with particular suspicion every ostensibly unusually well-preserved water-colour drawing brought to their notice.' So they must, as they have done with old masters, those especially so prized by Mr. Robinson, and in bric-à-brac too for that matter, as Mr. Robinson so well knows. He informs us that the commercial value of water-colour drawings is much reduced. I only know it is a rare thing to find a choice specimen of the masters, and buyers of them are always eager and numerous.

"In conclusion, I should say that when science is called in, to test colours, for instance, those colours should be tested under the same conditions employed by the artist. To experiment on a colour without its vehicles would of course be misleading, for, be it remembered, ox-gall, so often used in water-colour painting, is recommended in weak solution to hold fast delicately-coloured fabrics

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during washing. The size in the papers, the gums, say of gamboge and brown pink, with other fixers, alter the conditions altogether, and those fixers, as with pencil-drawings, I firmly believe are the cause of our beautiful drawings being preserved to us. Indian red, damp, and dust are the destroyers for the most part of water-colour drawings, and none but a madman would expose any picture or coloured fabric to the full blaze of the sun."

CHAPTER XXI

Review—Some Dutch and other pioneers—The De Witte drawing—South Kensington—Thomas Gainsborough : his trouble with paper—Letter to Dodsley—Paper a vital question—John Varley, Girtou, Turner, David Cox, J. D. Harding—Mr. Orrock's lecture—The delicacy, purity, brilliancy, and strength of water-colours—Neglect of English art by the National Galleries and other bodies—Reply to Mr. J. C. Robinson—The impeached pictures not faded—Scientists at fault—Professors at loggerheads—Mr. Carl Haag's testimony—Mr. Orrock's conclusions—Indian red—Evidence of the mischief caused by that pigment—Water-colours that require daylight exposure—Engravings after Turner's water-colours—Turner's invariable practice with the etchings—Mr. Goodall's further testimony—Anecdote of Turner—Mr. Ruskin's testimony to durability—Mr. Orrock's concluding words.

MR. ROBINSON'S protest, expressed with some warmth in the final stage of the controversy, against having those faded colours of his—"the pale ghosts of their former selves"—nailed to the mast, might fairly be construed into an admission that he had at the outset made too sweeping an assertion. He had omitted to differentiate. The drawings whose condition, whose faded condition, real or alleged, he had impeached, were, as it happened, distinctly representative of the history and progress of the Water-Colour Art in this country from the very beginning. The unfolding of the leaves, the bursting of the buds into flower, and the ripening into luscious fruit, every stage of development, with remarkable instances too of arrested development, were completely exemplified in that collection. Instances of beginners feeling their way, pathetic proofs of their mistakes, and examples of their triumphs, tentative and final, were displayed on the walls of the South Kensington Gallery. Specimens of the stained and tinted manner in drawings outlined with a pen, and washed (as in the case of Cozens) and finished with such a limited gamut of colour as "Indian red, lake, indigo, burnt sienna with black,"¹

¹ Redgrave.

James Orrock

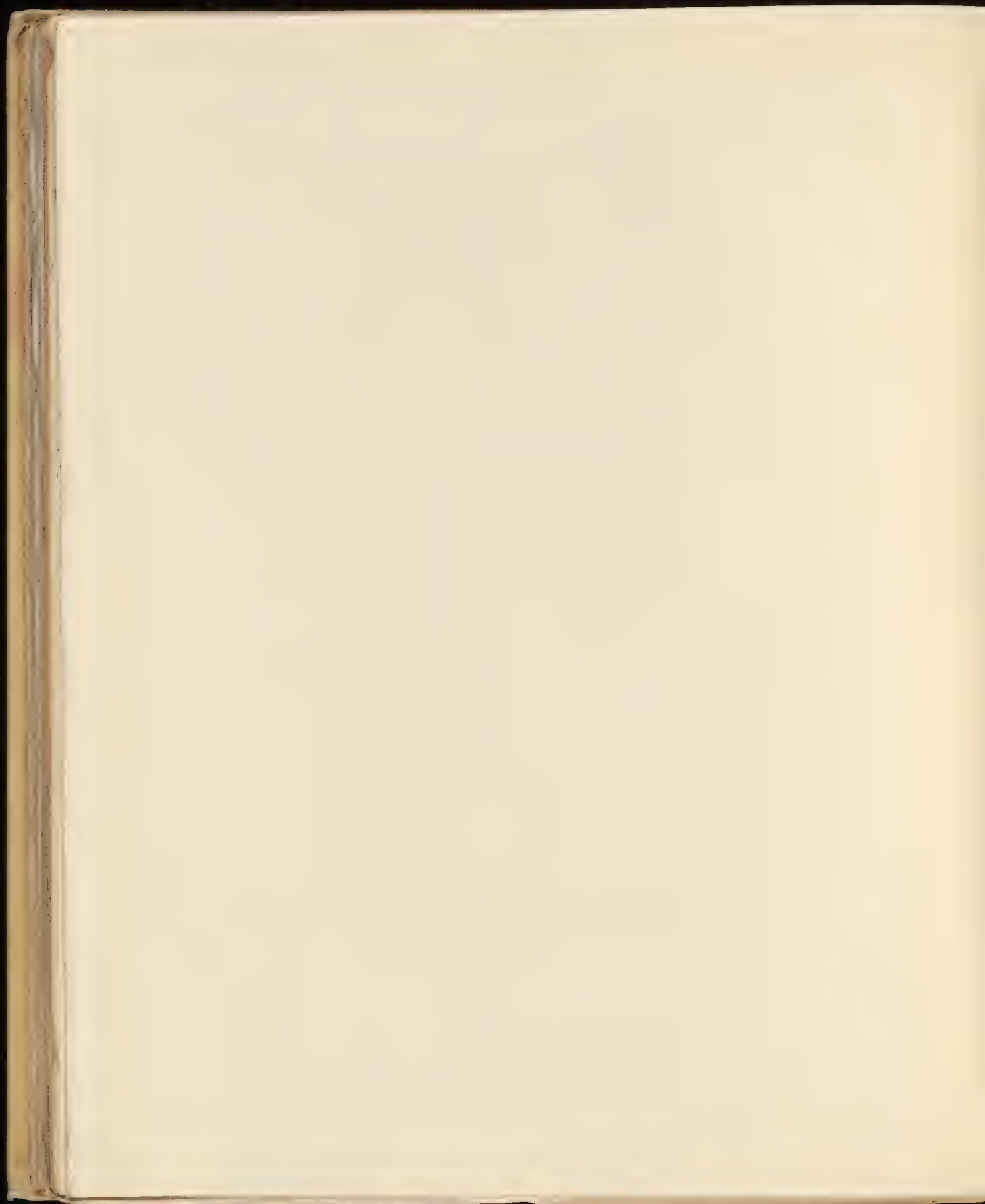
together with drawings executed in the splendid maturity of the process by Turner, Cox, De Wint, and William Hunt, were included in Mr. Robinson's denunciation. "All my pretty chickens and their dam;" not one spared; all gone, pale and ghostly. Remembering the conditions under which the pioneers of the art wrought, and the inadequate materials they were compelled to use, and recollecting that they were all of necessity experimentalists, it would be extraordinary indeed if some of their works were not "pale." But they were "pale" to begin with. They commenced to exist as "ghosts," and "ghosts" they have remained ever since, as any open-minded examiner of Dr. Percy's folios of essentially historical water-colours would acknowledge.

The Cinderella of the Arts, to use Mr. Orrock's felicitous metaphor, had a sorry youth, and though she homed and underwent transformation in England (as Mr. Robinson, not at all to the advantage of his argument, states), she was born in the Netherlands. For patriotic reasons, one shares the regret of the writer in the Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Artists that "no particulars are mentioned of the accomplished gentleman and artist," Sir Nathaniel Bacon, especially because at his father's seat at Gorhambury there "is a whole-length of him, painted by himself, in which he is represented painting on a paper." Was it Dutch paper? However, Albert Cuyp or Kuyp, the son of Jacob, who was born at Dort about 1606, "left a great number of drawings and designs heightened with water-colours, which are preserved as curiosities by the connoisseurs." Maria Sibylla Merian, "a German paintress who was born at Frankfort in 1647, and died in 1717, frequently painted her subjects in water-colours on vellum." John Sybrecht, a Flemish painter, born at Antwerp in 1625 and died in 1703, it is said "painted a number of pictures in water-colours as well as in oil with credit." John Bronckhorst, a painter of birds and animals in water-colours, born at Leyden in 1648 and died in 1723, comes to us in the chronicles, "as one of the most eminent painters in water-colours of his time." Of John Mounoyer Baptist, who was born at



J. M. W. Turner

IN BRADGATE PARK. (WATER-COLOUR SKETCH.) 1879.



James Orrock

Lisle in 1635 and died in 1699, it is related that "For the Duke of Ormond he painted six pictures of East Indian birds, after nature, which were in that nobleman's collection at Kilkenny, in Ireland." The authority quoted by John Gould in 1838 says: "They were painted in water-colours on vellum, and nothing can be more delicate in the colouring, pencilling, or spirited expression of every species." We return to our search of the record and find that "Hefele, a German painter of landscapes, flowers, and insects, who died about 1719, came over with King William's Dutch troops, and, after obtaining his discharge, settled in England. He chiefly painted in water-colours." Finally (and still in Great Britain), of William Hamilton, an historical painter, born in 1751 and died in 1801, it is said that "His coloured drawings imitate the fulness of his oil-paintings, with more freshness, and are finished with taste."

The running reference to the Dutch painters in the foregoing recapitulation is, one urges, not without its fitness,¹ in a review of

¹ It might be extended. "Holbein," Walpole says, "made a design in water-colours, which he afterwards executed on a house at Basle." Of John Dixon (Charles II.) the same authority says, "In water-colours there are great numbers of his works." Charles Beale, who flourished with the Merry Monarch, "painted both in oil and water-colours, but mostly in the latter." Marco Ricci or Rizzi, "who painted ruins in oil and better in water-colours, and land-storms," was practising his art here in the reign of Queen Anne. It is said by Walpole of Samuel Scott (George II.): "If he was but second to Vandervelde in sea-pieces, he excelled him in variety, and often introduced buildings in his pictures with consummate skill. His views of London Bridge, of the quay of the Custom-house, were equal to his marines, and his figures were judiciously chosen and admirably painted; nor were his washed drawings inferior to his finished pictures." Dallaway adds in a note: "He may be styled the father of the modern school of painting in water-colours, being the first who attempted to make his drawings approach the strength of oil-pictures, instead of leaving them as mere sketches." This gives an earlier fatherhood of the English School of Water-Colour painters than that ascribed to Paul Sandby. But, at all events, Samuel Scott was an Englishman. A whimsical humorist, with the playfully ironical temperament of—say Charles Lamb, treating of the earliest water-colourists, might quote from Walpole the following anecdote: "While he was in this service the Emperor Charles V. was to lodge at that lord (the Marquis de Veren), who made magnificent preparations for his reception, and among other expenses ordered all his household to be dressed in white damask. Mabuse, always wanting money to waste on debauchery, when the tailor came to take his measure, desired to have the damask, under pretence of inventing a singular habit. He sold the stuff, drank out the money, and then painted a suit of paper, so like damask, that it was not distinguished as he marched in the procession, between a philosopher and a poet. Other pensioners of the Marquis, who, being informed of the trick, asked the Emperor which of the three suits he liked best, the Prince pointed to Mabuse's as excelling in the whiteness and beauty of the flowers; nor did he, till convinced by the touch, doubt of the genuineness of the silk."

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the controversy on water-colours and their durability, as will presently be perceived. The Exhibition of Water-Colour Drawings by Deceased Masters of the British School in 1886 contained an alien work, admitted for a special reason. This (it has already been mentioned) was "120, 'Dutch Church,'" by E. de Witte. It was contributed by Mr. Collingwood Smith, R.W.S. The following note was appended in the Catalogue to the title of the work: "This drawing (although not by a British painter) is exhibited as a powerful example of the durability of water-colour." Mr. Robinson denied the genuineness of the drawing. "It is," he alleged, "simply a modern copy—and a very bad copy—in water-colours of one of his oil-pictures. Moreover, it would not have been too much to expect that they [Sir James Linton and Mr. Ruskin implied] should also have seen that the paper on which it is executed is of the 18th or 19th, and not of the 17th century." Now, granted that the drawing was not by De Witte; that, further, it was a very bad copy from one of the master's oil-pictures, what then? It would, of course, have been a proof, an overwhelming proof, of the durability of water-colours, if an unquestionably genuine drawing by De Witte, who died in 1692, had stood forth amongst much later works in something like its original brilliancy, but, accepting the allegation of its spuriousness as conclusive, what was the age of the copy? It had, Mr. Collingwood Smith declared, been exposed to daylight for forty-five years, prior to its coming into that exhibitor's possession! It is a pity that Mr. Robinson's knowledge of antique drawing-paper was not put to the test, and a thousand pities that a selection from his "examples by eminent Dutch masters, such as Adrian Ostade, Cornelius Dusart, William Meiris, Van der Meer de Jonge, Van Huysum, and others, which really mark the advent of modern water-colour art," did not form the substance of a supplementary exhibition. Ostade, perhaps the best known of the group, died in 1683, and the other painters mentioned belong to similarly remote periods. An exhibition of their drawings in water-colour could scarcely have failed to contribute to the support of the argument in favour of the durability

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of water-colours, Mr. Collingwood Smith's exhibited "modern" and "bad" copy of an oil-picture by De Witte notwithstanding.

It may perhaps be submitted, without a thought of giving the palest umbrage to that gentleman, that it was more the voice of Mr. J. C. Robinson, a former managing official at South Kensington, than that of an expert in or connoisseur of water-colours that was heard in his opening letter on the alleged condition of the drawings which had previously been under his care. He spoke with the authority of long acquaintanceship with the drawings in question. It is true that Sir James Linton and Mr. James Orrock, themselves practising painters in water-colour, and the latter an authoritative connoisseur and world-known collector, did the same; but Mr. Robinson had been in management at South Kensington, and they had not. That was an experience which naturally carried weight with the general reader of the *Times*. Mr. Robinson felt it incumbent on him, in the course of the correspondence, to disclaim any intention to attack the South Kensington officials.¹ There was no doubt that certain of the officials in power at the Museum felt that Mr. Robinson's disclaimer was not made a moment too soon. He had dissembled his love so darkly that the kicking downstairs—of somebody—at headquarters was an act that scarcely appeared to be actuated by extremely affectionate motives on the part of the operator.

Pursued to their source, the causes operating to produce many pale-tinted and ghostly-hued water-colours would be found to be identical whether the blinds had been pulled down when the fierce rays of the sun beat upon them or not. Allowing the utmost force to the stigma originally cast upon the South Kensington drawings, it would be discrediting the acumen of the assailant to assume that

¹ "It was not my intention to make an 'attack' on the South Kensington officials, many of whom are my old friends and former colleagues. The blame does not attach to them. . . . The truth is that the South Kensington managers have for a long time been misled by the sayings and doings of a succession of professional and other authorities, whose only claims to advise or overrule have been their social or official positions, or their eminence in departments for the most part more or less foreign to the specialities and requirements of the museum."

James Orrock

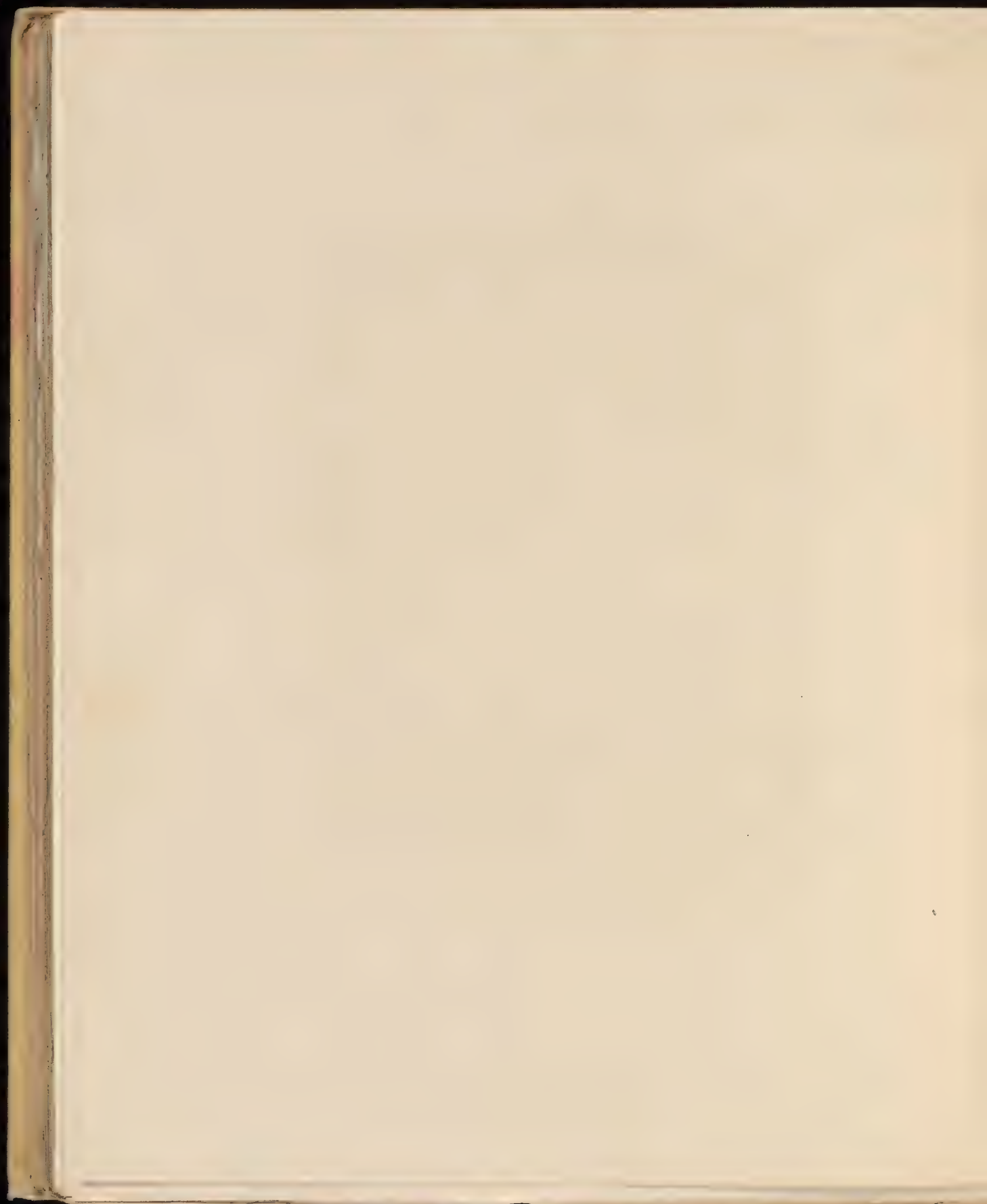
he desired the public to believe that every drawing was "sicklied o'er with the pale cast" of decay in like degree. He would probably even now, when the controversy has become historical, on a reconsideration of his case, fortify it against misapprehension with exacter definition by means of drawings selected for illustration of the ever convenient "more or less." Well, then, joining for a moment in such reasonably amended impeachment, why "more," and why "less"? The history of the water-colour art in England supplies the answer. To go to the root of the matter, irrespective of geographical limits, would be to extend the inquiry beyond a clearly prescribed scope. In 1824 the collection of works of art in Kensington Palace contained—and probably contains to-day—a "Portrait of Hans Holbein, by himself: painted in semi-transparent water-colours on canvas, a most curious specimen of art."¹ In a thorough investigation of the subject, such a curiosity as this would naturally receive attention, even if it did impinge on an inquiry into the unfortunate practice of Etty,² and the still more unhappy experiments of Turner, two painters who impaired the permanency of their work by a recourse to combinations of water- and oil-colours. Painting in water-colour on vellum—a not uncommon method, as we have seen—and even missal-painting, would take a place in the examination. There is, however, surer and more legitimate foothold

¹ "British Galleries of Painting and Sculpture," by C. M. Westmacott.

² Pausing at the comprehension of Turner and Etty in the allusion, made for the warning it conveys, I confess that I thought the coupling of the names somewhat forced, and was therefore inclined to delete the sentence. On reconsideration, however, and after making a further reference to the "Life of William Etty," I resolved to allow the observation to stand. Etty's experiments in methods, and the employment of mediums and pigments, were numerous. His finally matured practice, however, made for permanency, as the fortunate possessors of fine examples of his work have excellent reason to know. I evidently had a particular feature of his practice in my mind when I, in the passing reference above, associated him with Turner. But his failures to secure permanency were not invariably attributable to the combination of water and oil. Etty, on visiting Manchester and Liverpool to look after his pictures in the exhibitions, in the year 1838, "incurred considerable labour and anxiety in repairing and retouching the "Sirens," which had fared ill in removals by incompetent hands. For the "ground" of Etty's pictures was always "somewhat different in texture to the usual," requiring, in the case of his larger canvases, special care and familiarity with his works in those handling them. Parts of this particular picture accidentally possessed further peculiarities still less favourable. "At a certain period" of his painting, Etty subsequently relates, "when I was laying in



Benjamin Franklin.



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for the consideration of the student in the records of pure English water-colour art; and the first of the masters that arrests attention is Thomas Gainsborough. Few will question the affirmation of Mrs. Arthur Bell,¹ on other than the ground of his fidelity to nature, "that Gainsborough may justly be called the father of English landscape-painting, rather than Wilson, to whom that honour is generally assigned." Mr. Ruskin, speaking of Gainsborough, says, "A great name his, whether in the English or any other school; the greatest colourist since Rubens, and the last, I think, of legitimate colourists—that is to say, of those who were fully acquainted with the use of their material."

It will appear scarcely credible that from the first page to the last of Mrs. Arthur Bell's charming but in this respect inadequate "Record of Gainsborough's Life," not a word is said of his work in water-colours. Indeed, the compounded word water-colour is never so much as mentioned! He not only painted in water-colour, but was one of the first pioneers of the art who has chronicled the difficulty which beset them all in their efforts to find a suitable paper upon which to display their limited and crudely prepared collection of colours. The masters in water-colour claim him not only for this, but because his works in oil possess the exquisitely transparent water-colour quality. This quality appears in the oil-pictures of other masters, notably in those by Turner, David

the *chiaroscuro*, or light and shadow, I had unluckily used in some of the dark parts a too strong gluten or size with the colour *in tempera*. This, when the picture was removed, caused portions of it to drop and peel off; but only *partially*, under the picture, and not in the most important features of it." Richard Colls, a great favourite with Etty, and who often painted with him in later years, says, "He commenced his pictures very frequently with water-colour, using pure white for his high lights. His draperies were usually prepared in this manner; also his armour, which he painted so admirably. It was his substratum, or foundation, over which he glazed." I am familiar with Henry Dawson's rudimentary, or, rather, first-stage method. He (as Mr. Orrock has justly described) painted the entire subject in black-and-white, in oil, and then allowed the surface to assume a porcelain-like hardness before he applied the colour. His pictures, experts and connoisseurs declare, will last as long as—if not longer than—any oil paintings in the world. It is possible that I was thinking of the Etty and of the Dawson method, as well as recalling Turner, when I made the reference in the text. The question involved is vital to the art. That being so, I hope to be forgiven for having, as it were, dragged in an outside illustration by the head and shoulders.

¹ "Thomas Gainsborough: a Record of his Life and Works," by Mrs. Arthur Bell.

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Cox, De Wint, James Holland, and John Linnell. Poor and unsuitable paper, crude pigments, as well as what may be conveniently termed the tentative—the tinted and washed manner—are obviously to be taken into consideration in appraising the condition, whether they have been preserved in dark folios or continuously exposed to daylight in frames, of drawings by the men who commenced to practise the art.

The period of the Sandbys was, to repeat and emphasise a point already touched upon in the course of the present review, that of tinted drawings outlined with a pen, shaded in grey, and finished with washes of local colour. Artists' colourmen were unknown in those days, and Whatman's paper was not yet made at the Turkey Mills. Mr. J. L. Roget¹ points this out, and adds that in the collection of Mr. Edmund Basil Jupp, F.S.A., there are preserved two curious letters from Gainsborough, in the first of which, dated 10th November 1767, that artist, then residing at Bath, requests Mr. Dodsley, who published Anstey's "New Bath Guide," to send him some of the same sort of paper as that on which the fifth edition of the satire was printed, that being the paper the painter had long been in search of to make washed drawings upon. The second letter is as follows:—

"BATH, 26th November 1767.

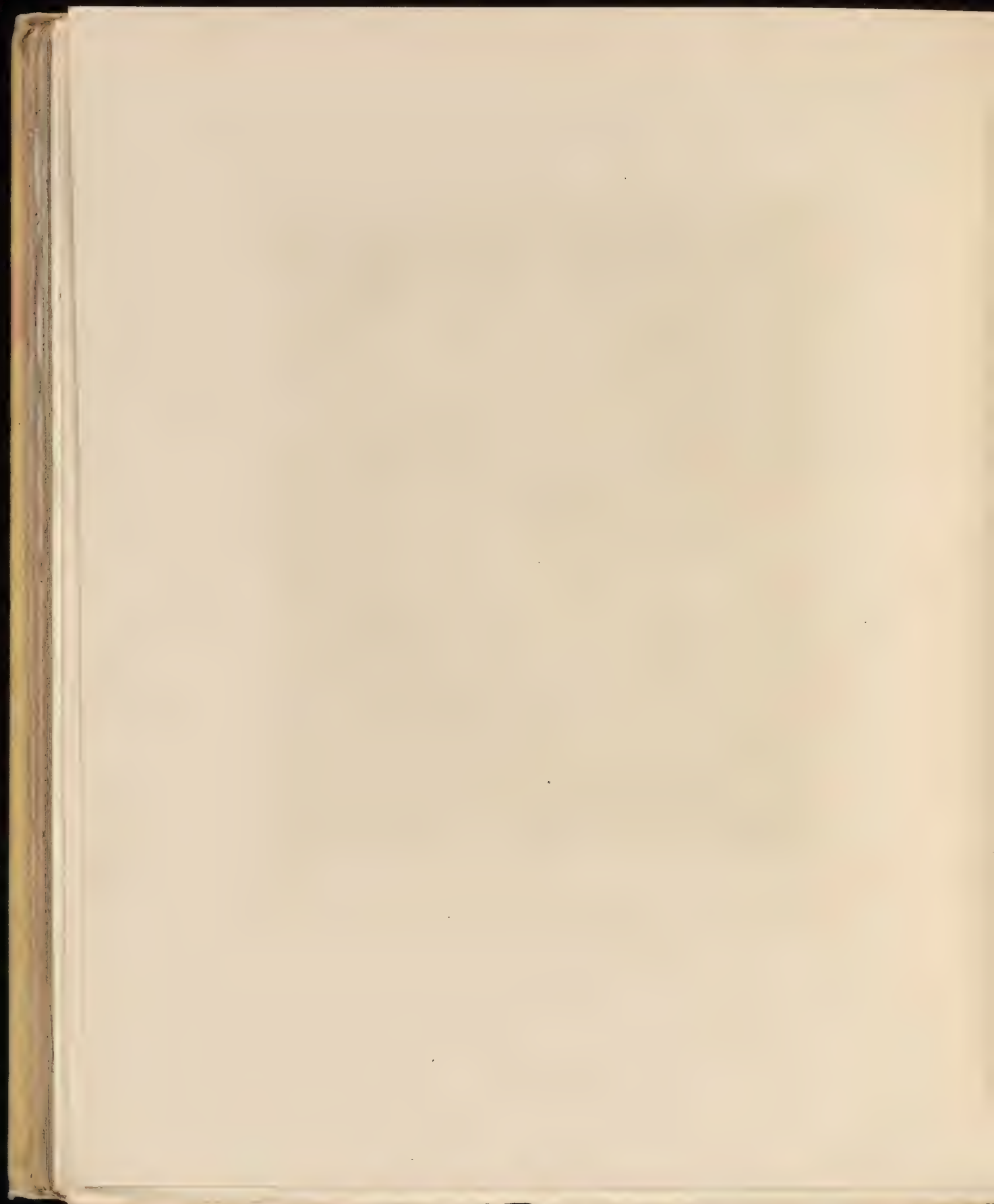
"To JAS. DODSLEY, Pall Mall, London.

"SIR,—I beg you to accept my sincerest thanks for the favour you have done me concerning the Paper for Drawings. I had set my Heart upon getting some of it, as it is so completely what I have long been in search of. The mischief of that you were so kind as to enclose is not only the small wires, but a large Cross wire at about | | this distance, which the other has none of, nor hardly any of the impression of the smallest wire. I wish, Sir, that one of my Landskips, such as I could

¹ "History of the Old Water-Colour Society."



M^{rs} Fitzherbert





A CORNER OF THE BACK DRAWING-ROOM
Pergolesi Commode with Panels by Angelica Kaufmann, R.A.

James Orrock

make you on that paper, would be a sufficient inducement for you to make still further inquiry. I should think my time well bestow'd, however little the Value you might with reason set upon it.—I am, Sir, your much obliged, and most obedient humble servant,

“THO. GAINSBOROUGH.

“P.S.—I am at this moment viewing the difference of that you send and the Bath Guide, holding them edgeways to the light, and could cry my eyes out to see those furrows. Upon my honour I would give a guinea a Quire for a Doz quire of it.”

“Thus,” remarks Mr. Roget, “Sandby and his contemporaries had to draw on common writing-paper, with such pigments as they could get or manufacture for themselves.” I venture to suggest that “from the evidence” on the face of it, the drawing fronting page 20 in Mrs. Arthur Bell’s “Thomas Gainsborough” is one of those which the artist made on the Dodsley laid or wired paper.

“It is not surprising,” wrote Mr. Walter Severn, “that some of the earlier drawings painted slightly (or tinted) with badly made colours on poor paper should have faded.” That was a fair position to assume, but was it not an over-generous concession to the enemy? There are drawings, many of them, extant, which were made with such imperfect materials as are named that have not faded at all. *Ergo*, they remain the “painted slightly or tinted” drawings they were the day the artist with his restricted pigments and poor paper, his timid method of washing or staining upon pen-made outlines, left them finished. But as to the paper, there is more to be usefully said. The question of certain colours affecting durability will come on for discussion next, by a natural order of progression. John Varley was a persistent experimentalist in paper, a fact which is to be borne in mind when the attention of the examiner is arrested by the occasional inequality of his work. There is, however, no occasion to labour the point in his

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case. A fine John Varley speaks for itself, trumpet-tongued. The weak ones may be left out of the witness-box, seeing that rightly they have no voice in the matter. "Thomas Girtin, one of the founders of the school," says a writer of the period in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, "was the first who introduced the custom of drawing upon cartridge paper, by which means he avoided that spotty glittering glare made on white paper." "It is said," writes Redgrave, "that the wire-worked cartridge he loved to work on was only to be obtained at a stationer's at Charing Cross, and was folded in quires. As the half-sheet was not large enough for his purpose, he had to spread out the sheet, and the crease of the folding being at times more absorbent than the other parts of the paper, a dark blot was caused across the sky, and indeed across the whole picture in many of his works. This defect was at first tolerated on account of the great originality and merit of his works, and gradually gave a higher value to those in which it occurred, being considered a proof of their originality." It may perchance be remarked in passing that such mechanical connoisseurship as this is not uncommon. The paper is creased and there is a dark line through the drawing, consequently the work is Girtin's!

"But," writes Mr. Papworth, to whose diligently accumulated notes Mr. Roget owes much of the valuable matter in his history, a debt which is handsomely acknowledged by the historian, "in those days paper was paper; it was made of white linen rags reduced to pulp by a badly made wooden machine which left it fibrous. Shortly afterwards Mr. Whatman produced, at his manufactory in Kent, a paper called vellum paper, which at once superseded all other fabrics. Its texture was calculated to receive the pigments and to bear out with a vigour of effect that the wire-worked paper could never be brought to possess." Then "the progress of science taught the means of adulteration, the use of materials which chemically quarrel with each other and the colours, and the employment of superbly finished machinery which leaves no fibrous texture. In a short period the damage of such operations was felt by Turner,

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who found that his paper required preparation; and even a quarter of a century had not elapsed before 'old paper' was worth a guinea a sheet to men like Harding."¹

We have already met with the chemist in these pages, and we shall have to confer with him again. A grounding in chemistry is necessarily a fundamental part of the education of a medical man. In a note personal to himself, Mr. Orrock has reminded his opponents of the fact. Even in the absence of proofs to that effect it would be reasonable to assume that there have been many artists who worked out problems in practical chemistry for themselves to enlighten, to correct, to improve the practice of their art. We know that grand old Henry Dawson, as Mr. Holman Hunt could and Mr. Orrock does testify, was one who pursued this practice. Francis Nicholson (born in 1753) was another. "Eminent as was his position as an artist," says Ottley, "he was also distinguished by his practical knowledge in mechanics, music, optics, chemistry, which led him often to try experiments, often highly interesting in their result. It was his practice to paint upon unbleached paper, and to use water-colours, the durability of which his experience had established. Some of his experimental drawings after thirty or forty years' probation, remained as fresh and full in colour as when they were first executed."

Mr. Roget observes that the year 1836 is to be noted in connection with the sequence of David Cox's works in water-colour, by reason of his having then procured a species of paper which he afterwards used for many drawings, and thereby gave them a specially marked character. Mr. Solly states that "Cox first met with the rough Scotch wrapping-paper, which, on trial, turned

¹ "Perhaps the most important was his 'pure drawing paper,' which he got made up to his ideal—perfect as suited to his habit of work, and certainly for those whose work it suited it was a great boon; a machine-made paper with two surfaces, the rough side having a pleasant tooth, unbleached and therefore with a slight tone. So long as he lived to superintend, it was perfect in its sort. This must not be judged of by the rubbish afterwards turned out with his initials upon it, and which is a libel on his reputation. I have some pieces of the old, and as they can never be replaced, I grudge to desecrate them by working on them."—*Reminiscences of J. D. Harding*, by W. Collingwood, R.W.S. (*Magazine of Art*, December 1897).

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out to be unabsorbent of colour when used for water-colours, producing a powerful effect. The surface is hard and firm, the paper being made from old linen sailcloth well bleached." On inquiry, and from a reference to the excise mark, the paper was found to be "manufactured at a paper-mill at Dundee, North Britain. There a ream was ordered for Cox, and it was some time before it could be obtained. On its arrival he was rather surprised to find that it weighed 280 lbs. and cost £11. However, his friend (and brother artist) Mr. Roberts was willing to share in the purchase, and after some years Cox rather regretted that the quantity ordered had not been larger, as he was never able to obtain the same quality of paper again. Some of Cox's most powerful studies and drawings after this period were painted on the rough Scotch paper. It gave the texture he required, and suited his familiar mode of rapid work with a large brush charged as full as possible with very wet though rich colour. It enabled him to obtain *power* at once. The paper was very thick, not quite white, with here and there little black or brown specks. In the landscape part these specks were of no consequence, but they looked out of place in the sky. On one occasion being asked what he did to get rid of them, he replied, 'Oh! I just put wings to them, and then they fly away as birds.'" William Hall, author of "A Biography of David Cox," describes the fabric as "a coarse low-toned paper manufactured in Scotland, of the kind used for wrapping up reams of the better sort of paper." He also gives a *variant* of the "birds" story. Mr. Orrock is convinced that Cox sized the "sugar-paper," as it is sometimes called, before proceeding with the drawings in question.

A veteran controversialist, who has perhaps taken part in more public discussions than any writer or platform speaker living or dead, says that he invariably followed, with profitable results, this threefold rule: state your case, clear your case, prove your case. It is submitted, on the part of the acceptors of Mr. Robinson's challenge, that this rule was followed by them to an exhaustive termination. Mr. Orrock was out of town when Mr. Robinson's

James Orrock

sweeping allegation appeared. It was not until the controversy, which had been promptly taken up on the side of the water-colourists by Sir James Linton, had made some progress that he entered the field. He had the last weighty words in the *Times* correspondence, but he felt, so damaging were the aspersions cast upon his beloved art, so grave was the issue raised, so prodigious were the interests at stake, that the case had to be proved up to the hilt, and with that object in view he prepared a lecture on "The English Water-Colour School: with Remarks on the late Controversy on Light and Water-Colours, illustrated by 'Proofs' before and after 'Letters.'" The strenuous discourse was delivered in the hall of the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts, No. 9. Conduit Street, on the 31st of March 1887. In the first part Mr. Orrock extols the water-colour art. "The colours are the same as those in oil, but the medium being more flexible and obedient, aerial effects, as well as the expression of light and brilliancy are more readily produced. Water-colour can produce greater delicacy, purity, brilliancy, and strength than anything in oil. I will place my Barrets against any oil-picture, even by Cuyp, and the Cuyp will look dull against them. I will place my Hunts against any paintings of still-life in oil, and the [superior] brilliancy and vitality of the water-colours will be undeniable." The Academies with kindred bodies of oil-painters, the guardians and guides of our National Galleries, were reprehended for their neglect of English works in general, and especially of the works of the English masters in water-colour. It was harping on a familiar string whose resounding vibrations had been heard by a sympathetic public and echoed by the press when Mr. Orrock dwelt on the "surfeit of golden-gloried saints, upon which such immense sums of money had been lavished," sums paid lately for three or four pictures, "that would, if prudently spent, have procured for students and the art-loving public, a noble collection of our own neglected Art, both in oil and water-colours." Another grievance of his, and a national one, earnestly proclaimed by the

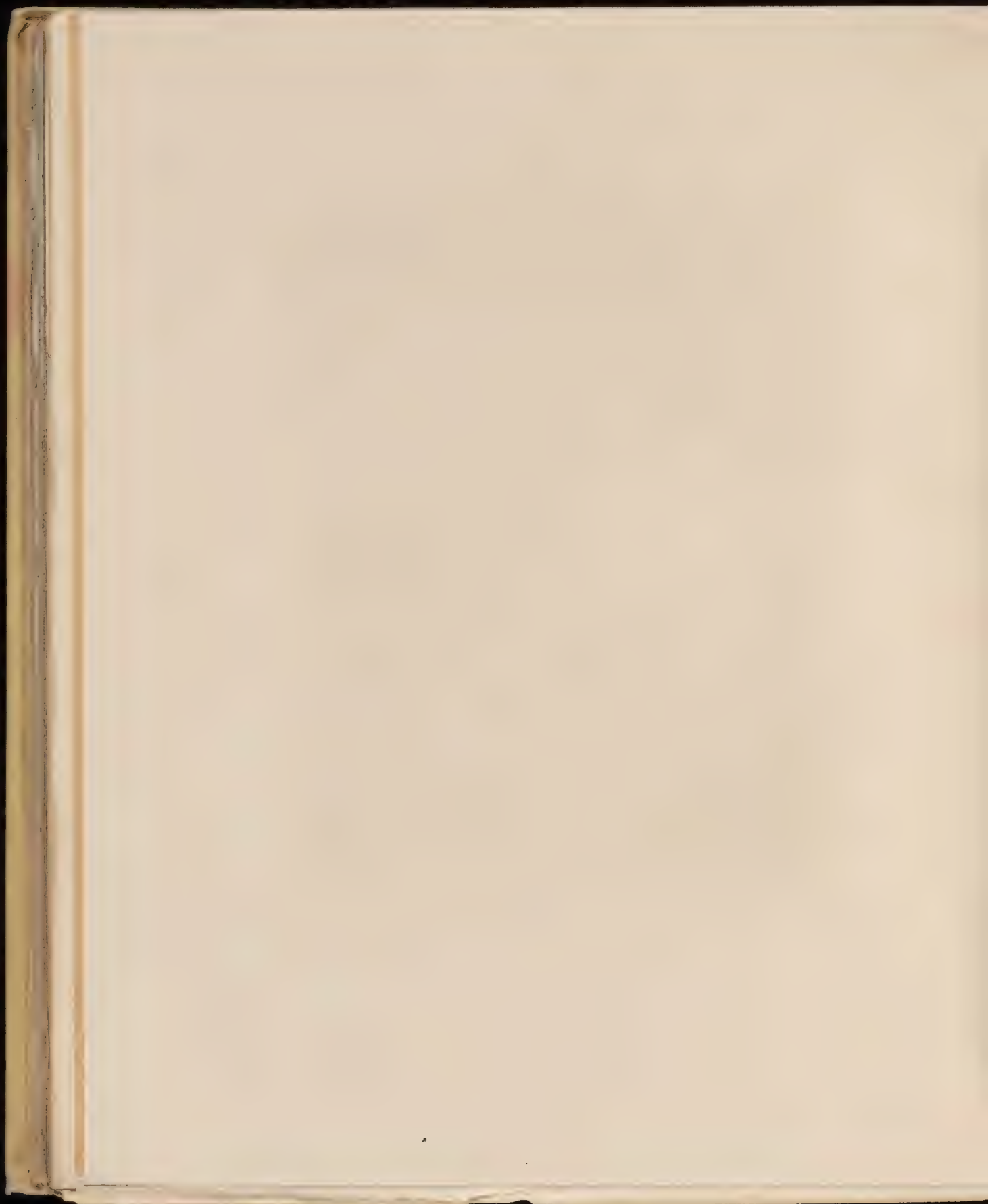
James Orrock

lecturer before and since, was compressed in the statement that "the authorities seem to think water-colours unworthy, for the few we have are shown in dimly-lighted cellars."

With characteristic thoroughness Mr. Orrock questioned every statement, met every difficulty, and grappled with every argument that had been advanced against the durability of water-colours. He did more. He carried the war into the enemy's country. In the course of the latter excursion there were flashes of a powerful search-light thrown upon the weakness of the position of the now silent and inactive assailants which were, and are, of the utmost value to both practitioners and appreciators of the water-colour art. Grouping together and naming certain drawings at South Kensington that were, he contended, as brilliant as they had been the day they were painted, Sir James Linton in his controversion of the original change had included the Cattermoles. Mr. Orrock said, with reference to a rejoinder to Sir James Linton, "Exception has been taken to the 'Spires' Cattermole as a faded drawing. That drawing, there is evidence to prove, was roughly treated and exposed to dust and damp while it was being engraved, and any one who knows anything of Cattermole's drawings would say that it was overworked, and the life of it in the shade parts taken out. The picture, however, since it came to the Museum, has sustained no further damage, and that is, of course, the point at issue." Professor Church, in his capacity as a chemist, differed from Sir James Linton, and with amazing valour named "a few among the many drawings at South Kensington which have greatly deteriorated from their pristine beauty." Mr. Orrock's reverence for such extraneous authorities in their attempts to determine such questions as that involved in the discussion is manifestly limited. He says in his paper, "the crude theories are from the scientists, for they persistently experiment on false premises. Why will they not test the colours in the pictures but those in the tubes? I will tell you—they do not know the colours in the pictures when they see them. Mr. Robinson, with them, is hopelessly ignorant of the colours when compounded and



Shelling Peas.



James Orrock

painted in a picture. Can a scientist test that which does not exist? Can a scientist tell us the kind of varnishes used on the Cremona fiddles? Can he tell us the secrets of the modes and methods of Titian or the mediums of Van Eyck and the Dutchmen? Can he tell us about the Chinese porcelain, its glazings, its firings, its anything?"

Whether or not Professor Church found himself at a disadvantage outside his laboratory and at close quarters with Mr. Orrock in front of the "few among the many" South Kensington "drawings which have greatly deteriorated from their pristine beauty," may be left to conjecture. Mr. Orrock was, at all events, upon his own ground. Within the Professor's laboratory the pair might have met on different terms. But the alembic of Art through which, as Emerson says, the Painter puts Nature, is not to be found amongst the chemist's apparatus, and when Professor Church brings his eyesight to bear on a collection of water-colour drawings, it is an act of common personal observation, and not the trained observation of either a critic, a collector, or a connoisseur. "I have carefully examined those drawings," says Mr. Orrock, painter, extensive and experienced collector, and acknowledged connoisseur, referring to the group mentioned by the chemist, "and I calmly deny that the Danby drawing is faded at all; it is, I am sure, as rich and bright as it was when painted. The two Daniell drawings are old-fashioned drawings, painted, as Barret described, in the primitive manner, and except from being ill-used before they came to the Museum, I should say have changed but little if at all. The same observation applies to Howitt's 'Lion and Lioness' and all the others. Delamotte and Buckler were born in 1780 and 1766, and drawings by the brothers Chalon must all have been painted early in the century. 'The Snowdrift' by De Wint I deny is faded. The lights on the snow are marvellously bright, and the drawing throughout is strong and brilliant. I will take the liberty of explaining to Professor Church the reason that the 'Grapes, Melon, and Plums,' by William Hunt, is not so brilliant as its next-door neighbour, 'The Basket of Plums.'

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In the first place, the drawing in question is an early work probably painted sixty years ago at least, when Hunt did not paint on body colour. This drawing was painted on paper with transparent colour, which, as any tyro knows, can never rival thick and brilliant colours painted like mosaic work on body colour, which was laid on thick on every petal and plum and left to dry hard."

Another chemist, Mr. W. N. Hartley, F.R.S., Professor of Chemistry, Royal College of Science, Dublin, was quoted by Mr. Orrock in proof of professional difference of opinion. "He tells us," says Mr. Orrock, "that oxygen, moisture, and acidity cause most change in colours, and not the daylight so emphatically insisted on by Mr. Robinson." Field's statements in his "Chromatography for Artists," a standard work, are contrasted with Professor Hartley's, especially in relation to ultramarine, vermilion, and indigo.¹ Mr. Orrock says, "We have often heard of doctors disagreeing, but here we have professors at loggerheads, and this too in the presence of a devotee who has just taken refuge from us at the feet of the Gamaliel of Science! Personally, I would rather trust to facts than theories, and I would therefore acquire my knowledge from the careful study and scrutiny of the works of the artists themselves in preference to the divided opinions of those, however learned, who will persist in making experiments *outside the conditions the Artists observed while painting their pictures.*"²

The Gamaliel referred to was Professor Church; the devotee,

¹ "The only blue colour of an organic nature known to the ancients was indigo (*Indicum purpurissimum*). There can be little doubt that this blue was indigo, and that it had withstood the action of air and sunlight for ages. In fact, neutral or alkaline indigo is a remarkably permanent pigment."—Professor Hartley in the *Chemical News*.

² "The process-hunter in painting is the alchemist of the palette; whose imagination riots in the hope of discoveries, which are to abridge the labours of industry, and reward the sagacity of science. Undepressed by disappointment, he persists, in spite of experience, and dissipates that time and talent in the crucible of experiment, which, if more reasonably employed, would have enabled him to obtain his object by ordinary means and known materials. The artist who has been once visited by this mania, is restored with great difficulty to the rational path of practice. As in most other insanities, the cure is never complete. There is always a disposition to relapse, whenever any little occurrence of Art, or accident of execution, supplies a new gleam of hope, or suggests a new hint for experiment and expectation. As everything in painting is effected by means

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Mr. J. C. Robinson. In the course of his paper the lecturer said, "I have lately had conversations on this water-colour controversy with Mr. Carl Haag and Mr. Birket Foster, and they in common with other authorities denounced Mr. Robinson's statement." This, so far as Mr. Carl Haag is concerned, was a remarkable attitude to assume. The method, the colour, and the quality of Mr. Carl Haag's drawings in water-colour are well known. He is one of the acknowledged masters of the English school. It is remarkable that Mr. Carl Haag was not summoned by Mr. Robinson to a conference with himself and Professor Church and Mr. (now Sir Frederick) Abel on the subject of the durability of water-colours, for we read in the "History of the Old Water-Colour Society," with reference to Mr. Carl Haag, that "True to this resolve ['to be himself one of this band of originals'] and to the principle of independence that he had shown on former occasions, he set to work to discover for himself the secrets of water-colour art; beginning with the scientific method, by making an investigation as to the nature of its materials. At that time (in the early fifties), the permanence of colours had begun to be seriously agitated. So, before attempting to paint pictures, he procured, from most of the artists' colourmen, samples of all the pigments they supplied, and, with the valuable aid of his friend Mr. [Sir Frederick] Abel, submitted them to every variety of test, the result being the selection of mineral colours for exclusive use. To these alone he has since adhered in his practice." One

of colours, it is proper that the question of those agents should be investigated, and their powers ascertained: but it is as dangerous to overrate this knowledge as to neglect it; for the practice of their application is worth more than the theory of their nature. The one is useful, but the other is essential; and he who has painted one picture, has gained more of the knowledge which is necessary to his Art, than he who has analysed all the colours of the palette. Mechanical modes of operation are certainly very important to the painter; they exist, however, in all the varieties of local and individual practice; according to school and skill. Experience proves, that the beauties of colouring are to be found by genius and industry in almost every system; they depend more on the eye and the hand, than the palette and the process; they are to be discovered not only in the practice of Titian, but in that of Correggio, of Rubens, of Rembrandt, and of Reynolds. And although in general the merits of the first of these great artists are to be preferred, if we ascribe his superiority to *process* we degrade without accounting for his excellence."—*Elements of Art*, by Martin Arthur Shee, R.A.

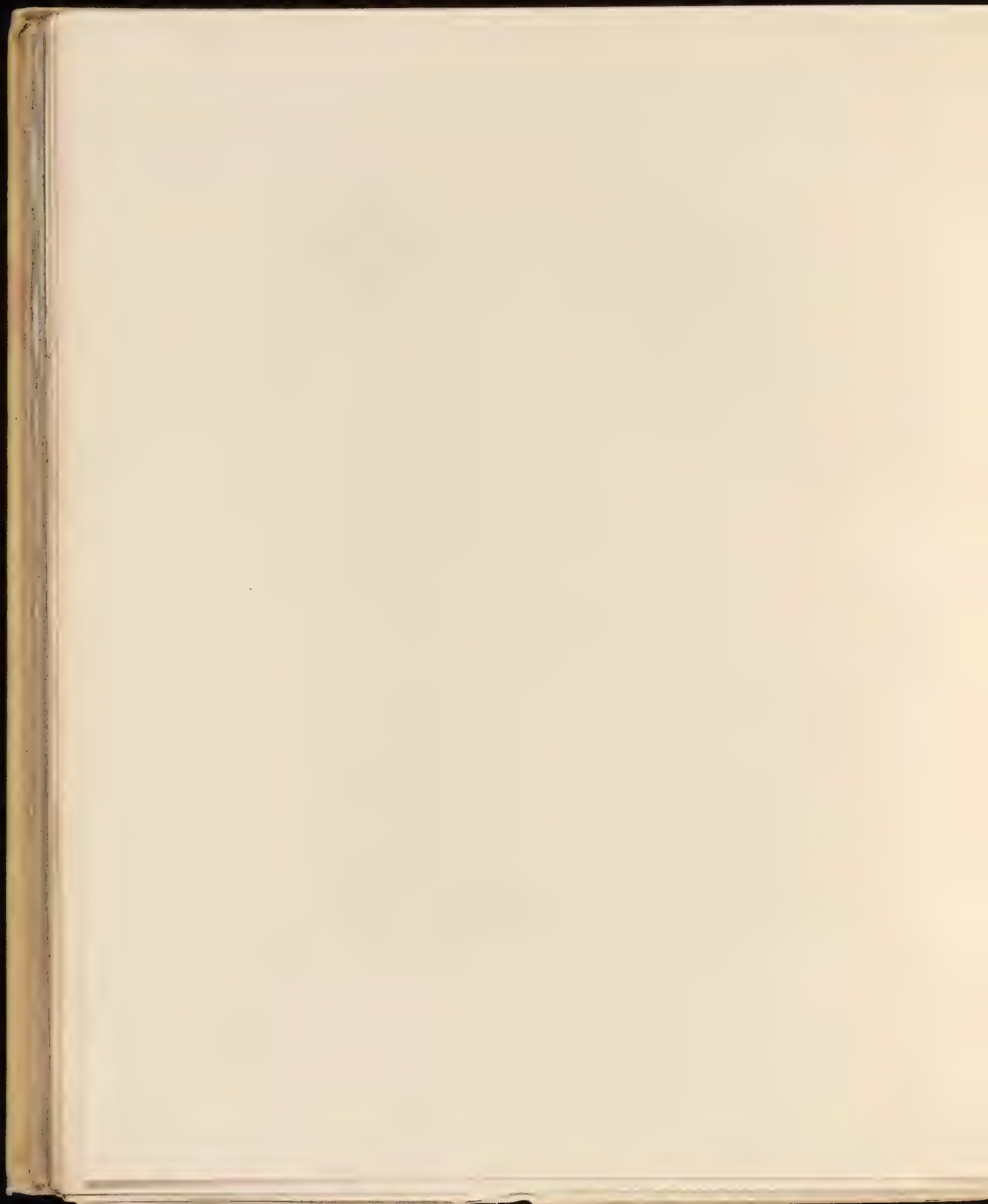
James Orrock

pauses not to ask "Under which king, Sempronius?" for the venerable artist has declared for "Durability," and made the declaration, too, with an eminent chemist on his side! It is true that Sir Frederick Abel took no part in the controversy, but he must have been aware of it, unless, indeed, he was too deeply absorbed in the manufacture of warlike cordite to concern himself with the permanence of pacific water-colour. The three chemists who have been mentioned in the matter may therefore be left at apparently hopeless odds with each other, while the painters continue to practise their art in their own possibly unchemical way. What the chemists would advise if they followed the painters into their studios for the purpose of experimenting there, it is impossible to imagine. It is said that Sir Joshua Reynolds used to scrape or otherwise disintegrate samples of the Old Masters, notably pictures by Titian or his scholars, in order to ascertain their colour secret. To employ words of even the gentlest derision respecting any grave pursuit of so magnificent a painter would savour of irreverence. Yet one cannot refrain from asking whether the roasting or boiling of a fiddle by an old master, to find the secret of the varnish, would appear a less foolish proceeding. In point of fact and experience, as the second successor to the first President of the Royal Academy has sadly shown, most of Sir Joshua's experiments in colours and mediums were unfortunate. It is, of course, open to any distinguished professor to take a water-colour drawing and subject it to the severest tests the wit of man or chemist could devise. If, however, a fine work by Barret, De Wint, or David Cox were put to such usage, it would be at the risk, on the part of the ruthless disintegrator, of being haunted by the pale ghost of the artist's former self for evermore.

In the course of his paper Mr. Orrock summarised *his* conclusions—conclusions built upon long experience as a water-colour painter and collector of examples of the water-colour art—as to the causes of apparent fading and actual dulness and deterioration, where any such exist, in drawings early and late—for the same causes affect both.



Shrimps.



James Orrock

"First, That no brilliant tints free from body colour, however thickly or thinly laid on, will have their full value when painted over a *dull or neutral ground (like millboard or brown paper)*, if compared with those colours, thick or thin, when painted on white or ivory-tinted paper. On this rests the whole subject of the controversy on the fading of water-colours. The dull and heavy grounds, whether prepared or otherwise, at once neutralise the brilliancy of the pure colours, and, what is more, eventually (if those grounds are not hard or set) absorb them altogether. The light grounds may become lower in tone, but the general colouring gradually goes with it, and, in numbers of instances, the drawings are as greatly improved as a high-pitched oil-picture often is after exposure for a few years.

"Secondly, The real enemies to drawings old or modern are damp, bituminous smoke, and Indian red, and the unequal manufacture of paper. We know that some paper will never mildew, expose it as you like, and other kinds, which look the same, will spot all over, no matter where they are placed. Every artist who paints out of doors knows that his stock of paper ought to be aired from time to time, and never shut up in a case or folio in bulk for long together, especially if the artist is painting near the sea. As to the impalpable bitumen in the London smoke or fogs, I know of nothing so fatal to anything that is brilliant in colour when unprotected.

"Thirdly, Indian red I have already spoken of, and of all the enemies of water-colour drawings it is the worst. Look, for instance, at the Copley Fielding—'Ships in Distress'—at the South Kensington Museum. The whole work is ruined, not by fading, but by being raddled and rusted all through, and by the red absorbing all other colours, especially if exposed to damp."

Mr. Robinson had declared without reserve or qualification that "Sir James Linton's assumption that the use of Indian red has caused the changes which he describes in certain drawings of early English masters is unfounded."¹ Indian red appears to have been

¹ "There is in the preparation of Indian red a ferric sulphate present, and when this red is mixed with indigo, the indigo is most likely to be destroyed."—Professor Hartley in the *Chemical News*.

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one of the real ghosts, if a ghost can be real, of the controversy, and not a pale one: the fading into nothingness of Turner's engraved drawings, as we shall further see, was another. But, Indian red's delinquency "unfounded"! Why, the notorious colour was *suspect*, and perhaps more than that, in the "locked-up" oil medium. What says Linnell? "I think it is the Indian red which James has just procured for you that spoils your cloud tints. I remember that Mulready and all I knew avoided that pigment as one that showed itself in a most obtrusive and offensive manner after the work was dry, and could only be used by the coarse portrait-painters of the regular old R.A. school. Vermilion is safer, I have no doubt, and will not appear in the tints beyond the time of the working. As the tints appear when first put on, so they will remain, whereas the Indian red comes out in stains afterwards." A contemporary critic said of the works of one of the early members of the water-colour school: "The blue that Mr. Glover used has disappeared from many of his drawings, from all probably in which he used large portions of Indian red." Again, "I think," says his pupil, Price, "that Mr. Glover's method with his water-colour drawings was always the same. I think that he invariably made a finished drawing in indigo, Indian red, and Indian ink, and then he coloured it. As the following are the only colours named by Barret for the use of students in his treatise on water-colour painting, it may be inferred that he confined himself to their use in his own practice. They are (*for skies*) yellow ochre, burnt sienna, light red, pink madder, cobalt, and for a finer wash to give brilliancy, Indian yellow. (*For other parts of the picture*)—the above, with the addition of raw sienna, Indian red, brown madder, Vandyke brown, brown pink, gamboge, and indigo. Observe: no Indian red in the skies." Neither was there in De Wint's skies, nor, for that matter, much of it elsewhere. He used Indian red in the landscape, sparingly, with occasional touches of body colour. The following list of pigments recommended for the student's use may afford an indication of David Cox's own practice. They are gamboge, light ochre, light red,

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vermilion, burnt sienna, Vandyke brown, Prussian blue, indigo, black, and sepia. Observe: no Indian red. Prout's mechanical method in preparing his drawings, laying them in in sepia, or brown or grey, the outline gone over with a pen, in which a warm brown colour was used, necessarily leaves him outside the typical group of full-blooded water-colour painters. He, with his "brown and grey," which "he kept in bottles in a liquid state," is not a competent witness. But he is there to be called in proof of the durability of water-colours nevertheless, as a reference to Mr. Ruskin's interesting note on the Prout drawing which he sent to the Test Exhibition will show. To carry this part of the subject further, even by following out to its manifold issue Mr. Orrock's further "submission" to the chemists, would be to encumber the discussion with unnecessary technicalities. Question and answer may, however, be given. "Will the scientist tell us why certain drawings have lasted better than others, and how it comes about that gamboge, brown pink, indigo, and even lakes have lasted in drawings which have been painted more than fifty years? Had those colours been fugitive, they would always fly; but there must be some other reason, or they would not remain as they have done in thousands of instances."

It cannot be too strongly maintained that the chemist, in his analysis of and experiments with pigments, made with a view to prove their fixed or fugitive character under exposure to daylight or sunlight, or where subjected to the pernicious influence of a variously-vitiated town atmosphere, has never so much as touched the *practice* of the water-colour painter and its results, and it is confidently submitted by Mr. Orrock that the chemist never can. What has the exposure under the known test-conditions of a simple colour to do with the exposure of infinite mixtures and manipulations of semi-tones and infinities of compound colours, which express the genius of a magician of the Art, as Turner expressed it in one of his wondrously aerial and brilliant landscapes? The fortunate and unfortunate marriages of colours

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the painter has discovered for himself. It required no knowledge of the chemical nature of Indian red and indigo, imparted scientifically, to teach him that those two colours would not live in blended harmony for the same length of time. The painter eludes the chemist from the moment he begins to paint, if indeed the absolute dismissal of the latter did not begin before. There is, first, the paper to be taken into account, with the sizing of that receptive surface, concerning which operation every painter thinks and acts for himself. In the next place, there is the vehicle. The modification of even commonly accepted vehicles by painters of precisely the same class of subjects is infinite. If anybody had asked William Hunt about this part of his practice, and he was not at all an uncommunicative person, he would probably have replied that "he fudged it out." Ox-gall, which ladies use successfully in restoring and freshening the faded hues of the most delicate fabrics, is employed by the water-colour painter in the practice of his art. No chemist has found and followed the action of ox-gall in a water-colour painting. To quote Mr. Orrock's words, the chemist finds himself confronted with "No Thoroughfare" when he comes to scientifically examine the artist's work.

Said Mr. Robinson, at the commencement of the controversy: "I believe Sir James Linton to be mistaken in his statement that certain water-colour drawings have gained in brilliancy and depth of tone by age." May we read another phrase into this expression of belief? Would it, comprehending all the matters in dispute, be unfair to substitute for "by age" "by long exposure to daylight"? The terms appear not unreasonably convertible. On such it is contended not unstrained assumption, the inference is that water-colour drawings kept from daylight exposure in folios and cases would retain their brilliancy and depth of tone unimpaired. Mr. Robinson's argument makes distinctly for that conclusion. Mr. Orrock, in reference to the Turner drawings lent to a then recent Exhibition of Old Masters at Burlington House, "which have always been shut up in folios," denied that they, as had been

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maintained, were "much brighter, and in a better state generally, than those in the same exhibition which have been exposed to ordinary daylight." Amongst them (they were all named and commented on) was "'Castle of Chillon,' painted about 1809. This drawing is darker than when it was painted, for the Antwerp blue which Turner frequently used at that time has become almost black. The fact is, this drawing, like a dark oil-picture, ought to be for a time exposed to the daylight, which would restore it to its first state." Mr. Orrock further contrasted the drawings in question with those lent by Sir Richard Wallace, Mr. Buckley, and Mr. Wheeler, which "had not been shut up," and yet were "in all particulars as fresh and bright as those lent by Miss Swinburne, with this marked advantage, that none of them are spotted or stained from damp from being shut up in folios and cases," as hers indisputably were.

Mr. Aynsough Fawkes took some of his famous Turner drawings out of their frames, and found absolutely no difference in the colour of the covered part—in one instance there was as much as an inch of the drawing so concealed—from that of the picture that had been for years exposed to the daylight. Mr. Fawkes said so in a letter to the *Times* (which Mr. Goodall afterwards pronounced conclusive), that has been quoted in a foregoing chapter. In reply, Mr. Robinson blandly observed, "I am very sorry indeed that *I cannot agree with Mr. Fawkes.*" How are we to characterise this rejoinder? To treat it as a "pious opinion"? How would a cross-examining barrister treat it?

No argument was advanced more triumphantly than that which was addressed to "all possessors of engraved drawings of Turner's works." They were recommended to confront the master's original designs "with fine impressions of engravings made from them during Turner's lifetime. In many instances," Mr. Robinson affirmed, "they would find that entire passages, and these often the most exquisite and subtle of Turner's original work in the drawings, have entirely vanished from the paper," &c. Mr. Goodall

James Orrock

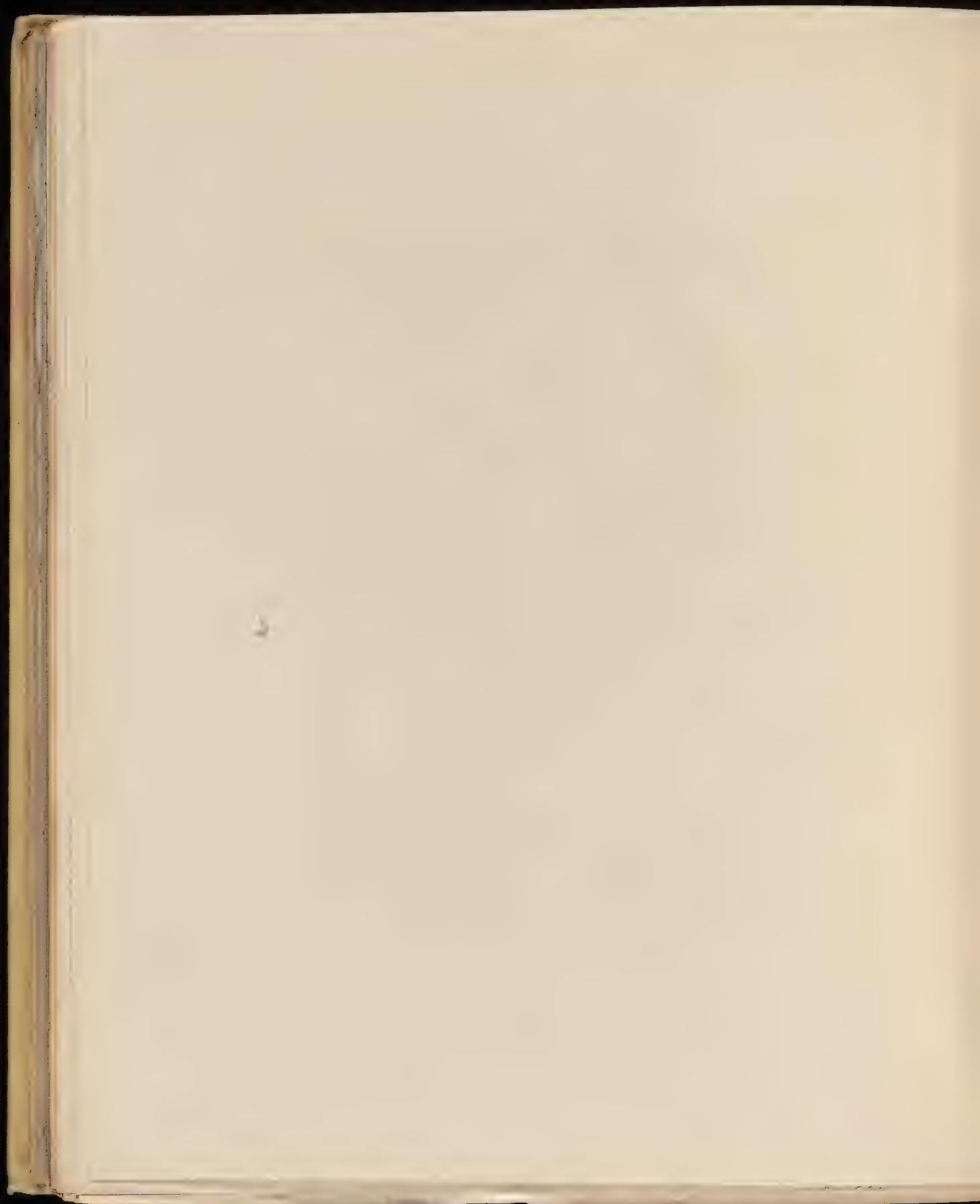
replied, and was met on the part of Mr. Robinson with a discreet silence that has not, as far as readers of the controversy are aware, been broken to this day. Mr. Goodall subsequently strengthened his testimony. In the lecture given by Mr. Orrock, that gentleman said, "I will read you a letter Mr. Goodall sent me on the subject a short time ago—'When Turner touched the proofs of my father's plates, he introduced objects and effects, thus rendering the black and white more forcible than the original drawing.'¹ The drawing of the Campagna now in the National Gallery is literally without a sky, and never had one. At my father's suggestion, Turner sketched one on the proof. Another instance is found in the "Fall of the Angels." Upon the proof is indicated by dots and crosses where he wished my father to introduce numbers of figures. Hence the outcry, not only faded but gone altogether! Just another anecdote. An engraver, not my father, went to Turner in great trouble, having over-bitten his etching. Fearing that it must be cancelled, Turner on examining it said, "No, I can see my way to turning it into a twilight." Now, that engraving compared with a delicate drawing would probably make the latter look rather faded.'"

The Art whose accomplishment in landscape was recognised as early as 1809 by Martin Arthur Shee, when he declared that Britain had "displayed a power, a vigour, a richness of effect in water-coloured drawings which rival the productions of the easel, and surpass the efforts of every other age and nation," the Art which made Wilson Lowry, himself a painter in the medium, an enthusiastic collector of the works of Callcott, Howell, Varley, and other members of the brotherhood in the beginning of the century, perhaps never had a braver or more effective champion than Mr. Orrock in the paper read by him on Thursday, the 31st of March 1887. In conclusion, quoting the words of Mr. Ruskin, he said, "'Properly taken care of—as a well-educated man takes care also of his books

¹ Miller, Turner's Edinburgh engraver, said of him that he was "always furbishing up with new effects."



*Salin Wood Furniture
by Sheraton, at 18, Bedford Square.*



James Orrock

and furniture—a water-colour drawing is safe for centuries, out of direct sunlight it will show no failing on your room wall till you need it no more.'

'And do we rip
The veil of Immortality? and crave
I know not what of honour and of light
Through unborn ages, to endure this blight?
So soon, and so successful?'

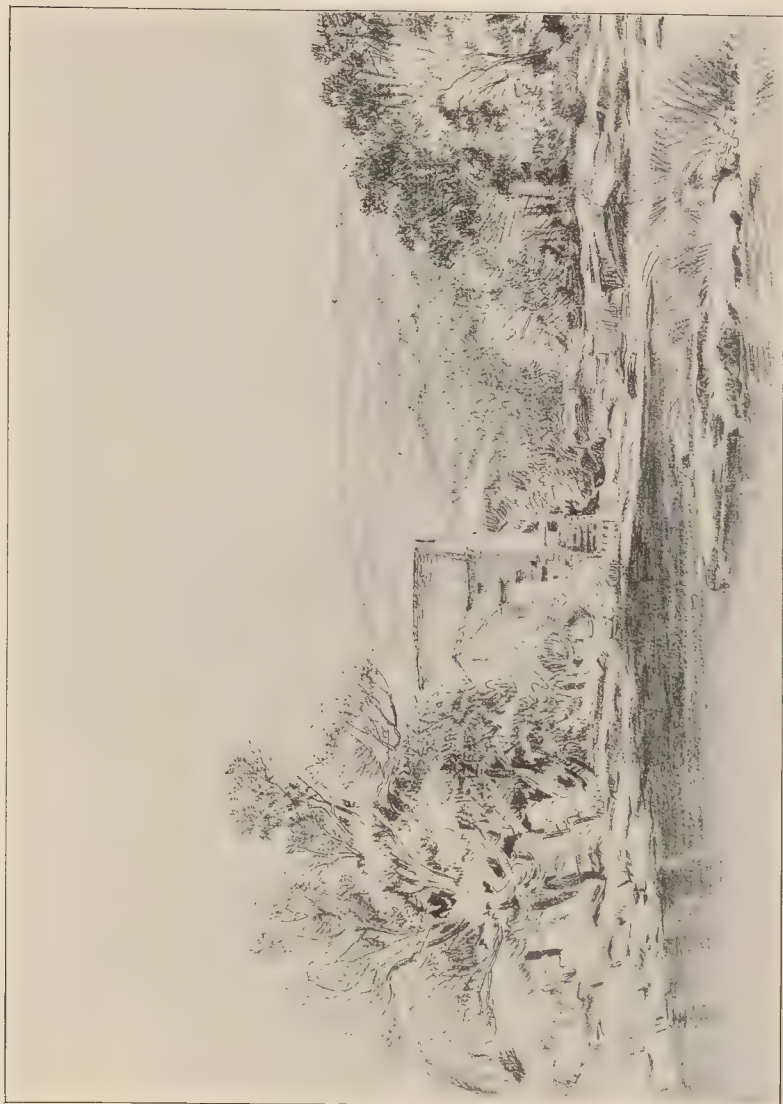
No! not so soon—not so successful. It has brightened the lives and elevated the sentiments of one generation, and will do the same for many more, for our Cinderella will be more and more a Princess with her every jubilee. She has already been the theme of the grandest prose poem of modern times,—the central figure of Ruskin's 'Modern Painters,' and in Ruskin's writings and Turner's works she will have her Immortality."

CHAPTER XXII

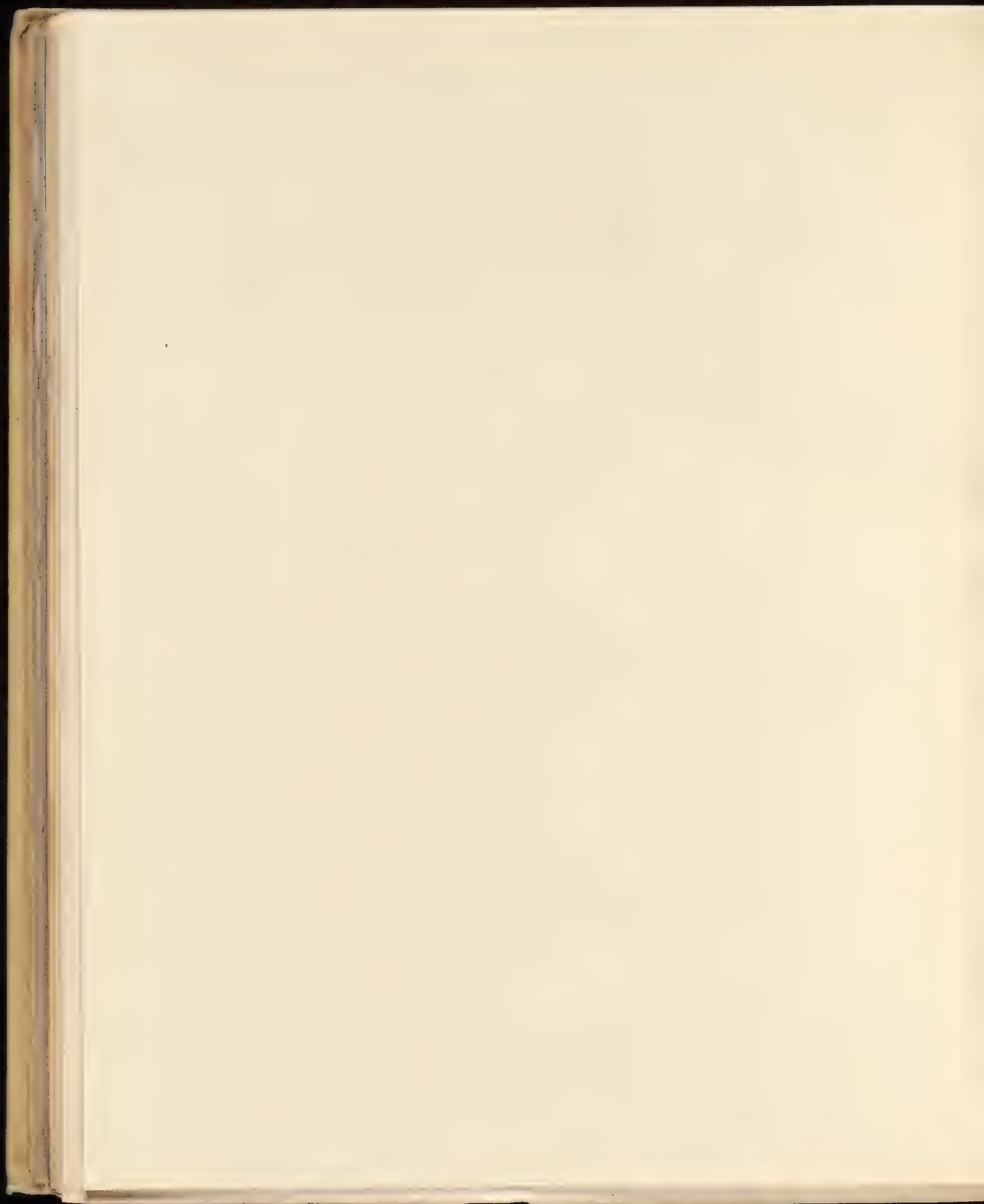
Exhibitions of Mr. Orrock's drawings—"The Country of Scott"—Mr. Walter Armstrong's graphic notes—"The Writings of Scott"—Association with Sir James Linton—The "Mary Stuart" series; scenery and characters—The alliance of Mr. Orrock and Sir James versified by a brother Savage—At Berwick-on-Tweed: a douce Boniface—At Threave—A frustrated bully—Silenced by the Press—A Wensleydale patron of the arts and Mr. "Corks"—"I'll bed you, and board you, and drive you about"—Flight—The *Warwick Arms*—Shakespeare's country—A delightful summer's work—A serious accident.

TWO important detached and (if the expression be allowed) semi-detached exhibitions of specific drawings by Mr. Orrock took place at the galleries of Messrs. Dowdeswell and Dowdeswells, New Bond Street, in 1886 and 1887.

The first was catalogued as a series of Drawings illustrating the Country of Scott on the English and Scottish Border. Jedburgh, Melrose, Dunstanborough, Holy Island, Bamborough, Kelso, Warkworth, Tantallon, Abbotsford, Berwick, Smailholme Tower, Norham Castle, Alnwick, and other places made memorable by the immortalising pen of the Wizard of the North, appeared in Mr. Orrock's series of fifty-one important works that were exhibited on the walls, while a portfolio of pencil sketches made in the pursuit of his object were placed at the disposal of the collector of such interesting outlines of facts and ideas. Mr. Orrock was happy in the choice made of his expositor. The "Notes by Mr. (now Sir) Walter Armstrong" invested the catalogue with a value beyond that which attached to them as an interpretation of the pictorial chronicle of Mr. Orrock's tramp through the Classic Borderland. The castle of the proud and daring Armstrong is a rugged ruin, but enough remains of the doughty keep to swear by, and although there is no door left to open to friend or shut against foe, the present chief of the name still retains among his cherished possessions



THRUM MILL, CRAGSIDE, NORTHUMBERLAND. (PENCIL SKETCH.) 1835.



James Orrock

the castle-key! The inheritor's invitation to visit his feudal seat, and the offer of the key to the unsuspecting object of his hospitality, is a merry jest he enjoys. An art-critic with a catholic appreciation, and an especial acquaintance with Gainsborough's work and characteristics, he is steeped in Border lore. And he knows and loves his Scott. It was therefore as happy a selection of him to elucidate Mr. Orrock's illustrations of the Country as it would have been to secure Mr. Ruskin in relation to an exhibition of a collection of water-colour drawings, by Turner or William Hunt. The author's view of the Borderland, and of Mr. Orrock's pictorial record of his summer and autumn pilgrimage, may be quoted: "The classic lands of the Border include two counties on the English and four on the Scottish side. These are Northumberland, Cumberland, Berwickshire, Roxburghshire, Selkirkshire, and Dumfriesshire. Spread over nearly their whole length and breadth there are sites made famous either by deeds of Homeric war or by poetic association. These lie thickest, of course, along the Border itself, along the banks of the Tweed and its parent streams, but it is not until we are a long day's drive either to the north-west or the south-east that we step off the stage made famous by the men who kept the 'marches,' and those who sang their exploits. The present collection of drawings is confined to the eastern watershed, and mainly to its southern half. Nearly all the subjects selected lie on one or another of the rivers which send their waters into the North Sea between Morpeth and Dunbar; and in these notes the best plan will be to take each river in turn, beginning at the south, and to say something upon each spot at which Mr. Orrock has set up his easel."

So said, so done. The chronicler makes his first halt at the Wansbeck, passes thence to the Coquet, one of the loveliest and most romantic of rivers, and wondrously rich in historical poetry, and then, after a digression to the coast—in itself most interesting, since it includes Dunstanborough and Bamborough, "the most imposing ruin in the north of England"—pauses on the Till. "About

James Orrock

eight miles from its junction with the Tweed it begins to wind round Flodden Field." Writes Mr. Armstrong, that "Between the outfall of the Till and Berwick the Tweed only passes one place at which I need pause, and that is Norham Castle, to which every lover of our great English landscape painter has so often taken off his hat." "Norham Castle" was Turner's first lucky picture, his mascot, as it remains one of his finest. Its fame remains unimpaired to this day. As its production proved the turning point of his career, the achievement touched the highest point of his unrivalled powers. "Eight miles below Norham the Tweed threads its way through the two bridges at Berwick" (the subject of one of Mr. Orrock's most important drawings), "the Calais of the English frontier." The writer tracks the artist step by step, discoursing the while, as a Monkbarns might have discoursed by the Tweed, the Yarrow, the Ettrick, the Teviot, and the Jed. He pauses with him at Smailholme Tower, near which "lies Sandyknowe, the home of the poet's grandfather, and the house in which some of his own childhood was passed." They part company, guide and painter, before

"His towers, Tantallon vast,
Broad, massive, high and stretching far,
And held impregnable in war,
On a projecting rock they rose,
And round three sides the ocean flows,
The fourth did battled walls enclose
And double mound and fosse."

The second exhibition, at Dowdeswells', was illustrative of "the writings of Scott." In this work Mr. Orrock was associated with Sir James D. Linton, who supplied a number of studies of characters in Scott's poems and novels. The figure subjects included William of Deloraine, Lady Heron, Marmion, Nanty Ewart, the Lady Margaret, Julia Mannering, and Dominie Sampson. In Mr. Armstrong's note on "the Classic Lands of the Border" prefixed to the Catalogue, he points out that the drawings are taken chiefly from Cumberland, Dumfriesshire, and the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright. Respecting the

James Orrock

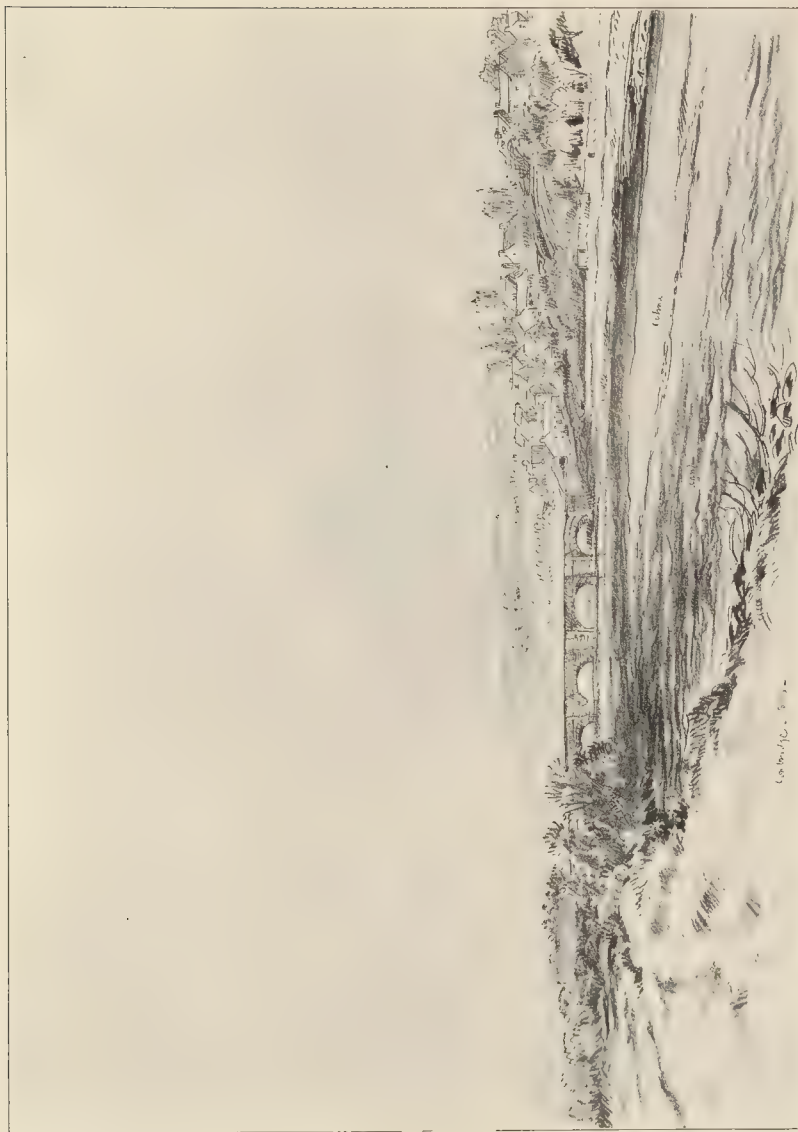
curiously sharp transition between the scenery of Scotland and England which is marked by the western border, Mr. Armstrong writes, "When I was a boy, I remember hearing of some old farmer in the fertile valley of the Teviot, who, having lived sixty years in the world and never seen England, set off to the Border that he might at least catch a glimpse of the 'boasted South.' Starting at dawn on a long summer day, he tramped south by east, until noon found him on the last spurs of the Cheviots, where the hills close in and force the Liddel to make its way to the Esk through a series of picturesque 'linns.' Looking south from this point of vantage, his eye travelled over the naked undulations of the Waste; not a tree nor a living thing was in sight to speak up for the fame of England, and the weary pedestrian turned on his heel with a—well, with a strongly expressed doubt as to the veracity of the English!"

The enricher and illuminator of the Catalogue proceeds with Mr. Orrock through this remarkable country to "Mumps ha'," where Harry Bertram met Meg Merrilies and Dandie Dinmont, thence to the "Popping Stone" which tradition declares was the scene of the betrothal of the young advocate Walter Scott and Miss Charlotte Margaret Carpentier, taking us then, as it were, on the back of an imaginary Dumble to one of "the bare sheep runs on which Dandie Dinmont chased his fox." Thence we accompany him—and Mr. Orrock—to "the valley of Liddel," which "is closed to the north by the gloomy ruin of Hermitage Castle, and dotted with relics of the Armstrongs." Naworth Castle, twelve miles north-east of Carlisle, and Lanercost Priory, close to, occur picturesquely in the conjoint pilgrimage, which thence proceeds along the devious windings of the valley of the Esk to "Canobie—the Canobie of young Lochinvar—and Gilnockie Tower, the fortalice built by Johnnie Armstrong when he left his brother at Mongerton, and set up for himself." In this pleasant and pictorial company—and be it said that Mr. Armstrong's prose is now and then as rich in picture, inspired by the drawings whereof he treats, as

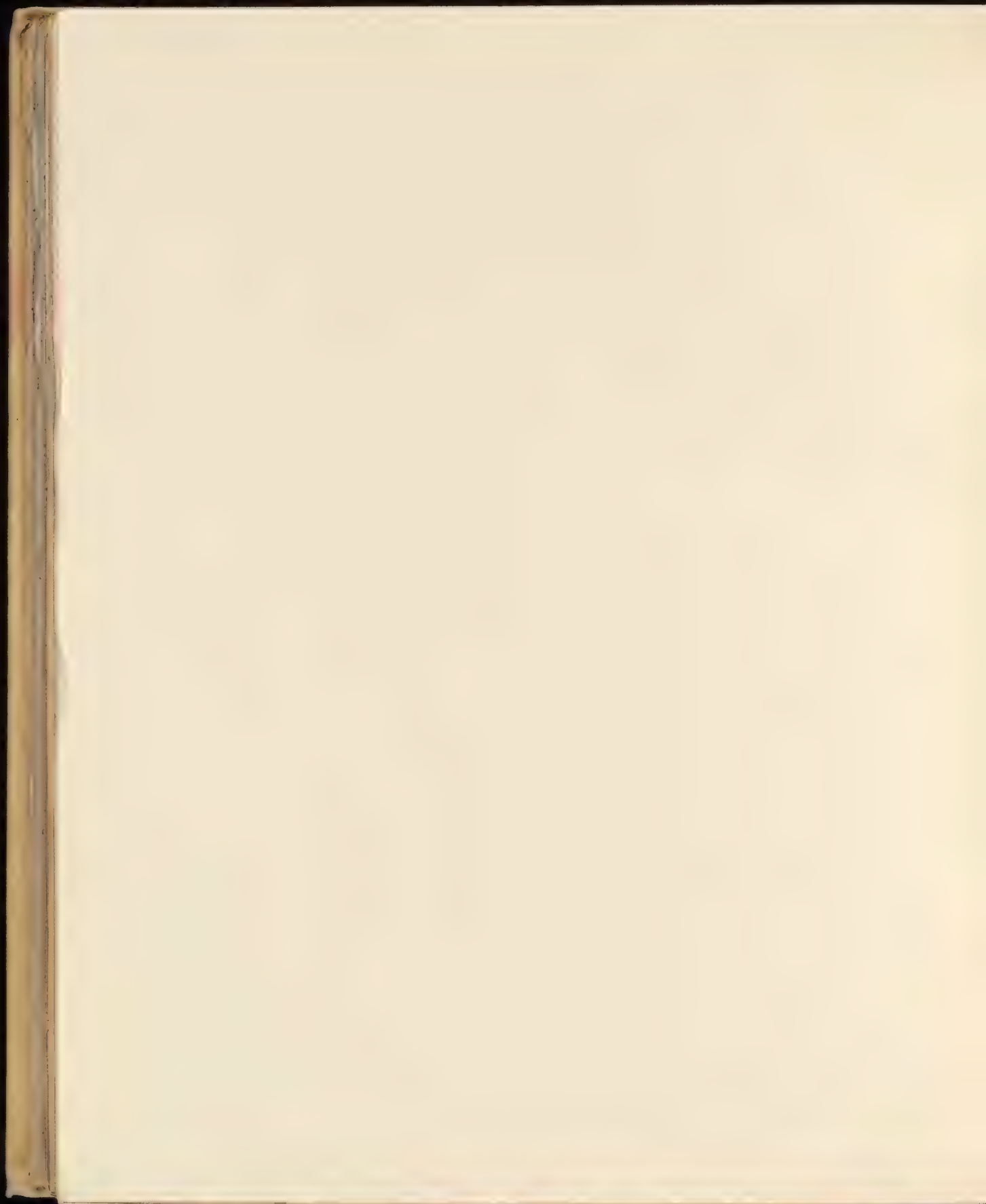
James Orrock

that of the renowned novelist himself—we are taken by way of the Teviot to Branksome, and thence to Melrose, pausing at Cam-longan and Threave, “the forbidding stronghold of the Douglasses. Archibald’s hold was Threave Castle on the Dee. Built by Black Douglas, it has seen more eerie doings than perhaps any other stronghold in the south of Scotland. Even yet a projecting stone is pointed out, near the eaves, which for centuries has been known as the Gallows Knob, and for years together was never without its tassel in the shape of a dangling body. Threave was taken after a long siege by James II. It was the last strength that held out for the Douglasses, and tradition will have it that ‘Mons Meg,’ the great gun now in Edinburgh Castle, was the cause of its fall. A gaping breach in the south wall of the castle is said to have been the work of Meg’s projectile. According to the legend, she was forged in the neighbourhood by three smiths, called M’Kim, a father and two sons, and dragged into position on a height still called Knockcannon, in front of the castle. Her regulation charge was a peck of gunpowder and a granite ball, ‘the weight of a Carsphairn cow.’ At the first shot the garrison was scared; the second made the hole in question, and took off the right hand of Archibald’s wife, the Fair Maid of Galloway. To make the tale complete, the ashes of the M’Kims’ forge have been identified at Carlingwarth, near Threave, where Meg was made, while the two cannon balls—they are of Galloway granite—the skeleton of the Fair Maid’s hand, and her wedding-ring, have all been found in the ruins! Unhappily at Ghent there is a twin sister to Meg, and she was made at Mons, in Hainault, in 1486.” Other pauses are made by the writer at Caerlaverock, the central object of a favourite sketching-ground of the artist’s, with which he has been lovingly familiar from his boyhood, at Criffel, and at other interesting places in the land of Sir Walter Scott. All these Mr. Orrock, a true son of “Caledonia stern and wild,” and an idolater of the wizard, has made freshly and faithfully pictorial.

The year 1889 found Mr. Orrock again before the public with



CORBRIDGE, NORTH TYNE, NORTHUMBERLAND. (PENCIL SKETCH.) 1856.



James Orrock

a collection of drawings, in many respects the most important which he had grouped together for exhibition. Once more Sir James Linton and he were in alliance, with Mr. Armstrong as "chorus." The series was "illustrative of characters and scenery associated with Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots," the figure subjects by Sir James Linton, and the landscapes by Mr. Orrock. The exhibition took place at Messrs. Thomas Agnew & Sons' Galleries, 39 Old Bond Street, and proved one of the most conspicuous of the minor art attractions of the winter season. The prefatory Note to the Catalogue stated that "The landscape drawings in this collection have been studied on the spot, and are as minutely faithful as the conditions would allow. The figures are, of course, more imaginative, but the general characteristics of each person, as handed down by tradition and such portraits as exist, have been the basis for their treatment. The one exception to this is the drawing of Rizzio, which shows him rather as he might have been before he made acquaintance with the mists of the North, than as the crooked and middle-aged secretary of Mary Stuart." As in the former exhibitions, the "Queen of Scots" collection displayed Mr. Orrock's conscientious diligence, as well as his patriotic affection for his theme, in a marked degree. He had done his work thoroughly and lovingly, left no part of his romantic pilgrimage unfulfilled. The story of the beautiful Queen, who has had almost as many traducers as champions, acquired fresh interest in English as well as in Scottish eyes as Mr. Orrock's achievement was revealed. Upwards of a hundred drawings represented Mr. Orrock's part in the exhibition, and told, eloquently enough, the tale of his travels and sojourn. It is his habit to live amongst the scenes he loves until, to quote the graphic expression of a popular novelist, their beauty "soaks" into him. Hence it is that we never fail to find nature expressed by him in Wordsworthian sincerity in his slightest sketch, and for the same reason recognise adhesion to a favoured spot until its loveliness, viewed and studied and painted from many points of view, has spoken for repetition the last seductive word.

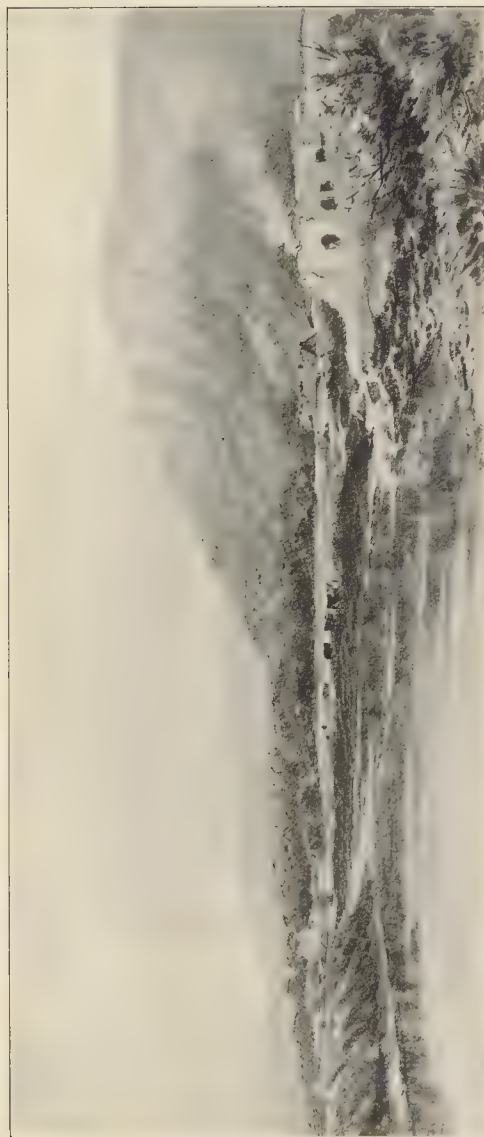
James Orrock

In addition to such memorable places in Mary Stuart's strange eventful history as "Loch Leven," "Craigmillar Castle," "Holyrood," "Edinburgh," in other aspects "Criffel," "Stirling Castle," "Dunbar Castle," "St. Andrews," "Fotheringay Castle," "Jedburgh Abbey," "Queensferry," and "Dundrennan Abbey," Mr. Orrock had "Peterborough" and "Bolton Castle" in his curiously interesting collection. Amongst Sir James Linton's contributions to the collection were "Mary Stuart," "Darnley," "Mary Seton," "Mary Fleming," "George Douglas," "Mary Beaton," "Mary Livingston," and "Lord Lindesay of the Byres." The notes to the Catalogue, by Mr. Walter Armstrong, were so many sketches in compact and picturesque prose of scenes and incidents in the life of the unfortunate Queen, which conferred permanent value on the list of the drawings.

In relation to the alliance of Sir James Linton and Mr. Orrock in Two-men exhibitions, to which the former supplied the figure and the latter the landscape subjects illustrative of the land and scripture of Sir Walter Scott, a Brother Savage wrote some familiar verses from which an extract or two may be made. First, as to Mr. Orrock and his mission:—

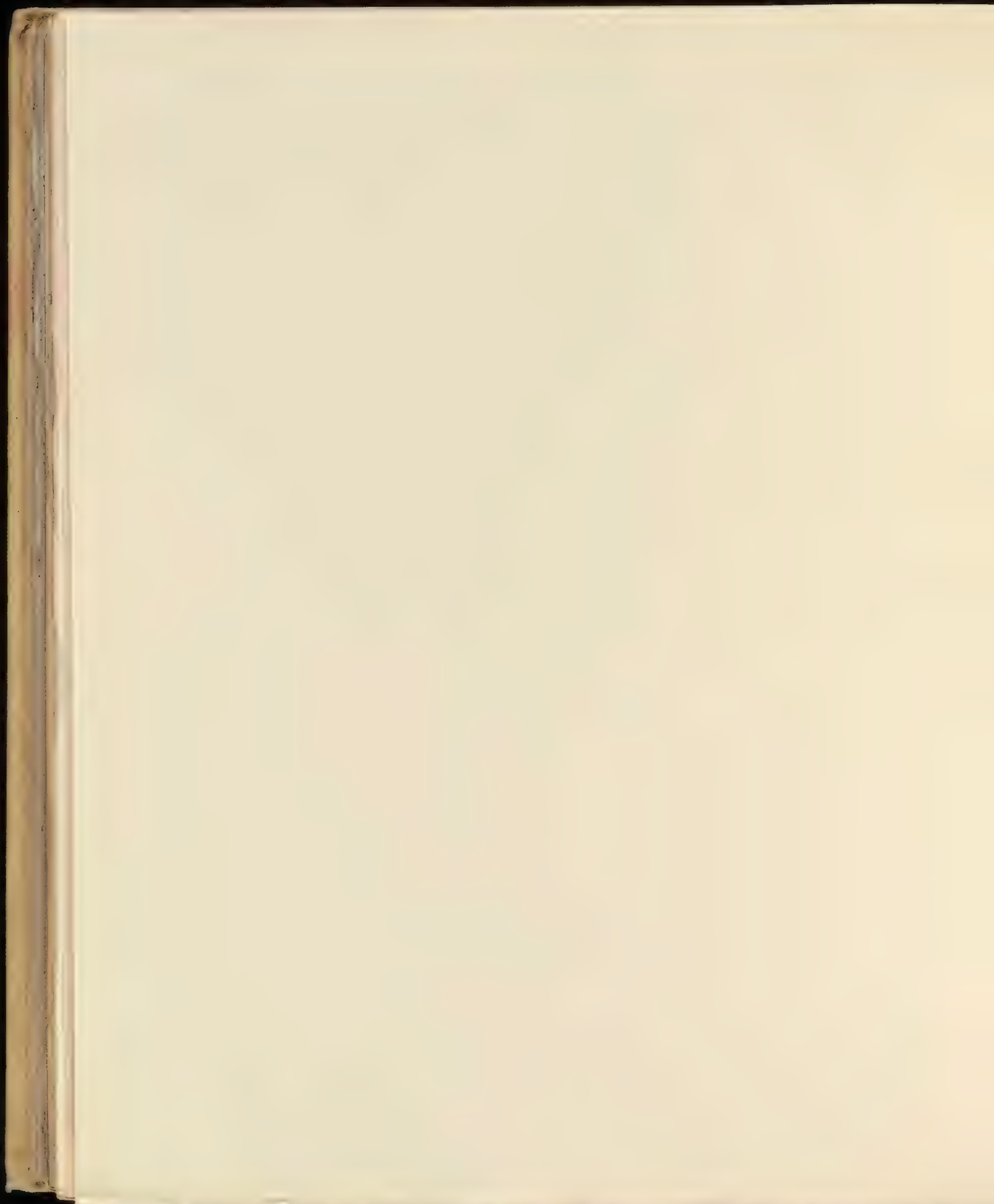
"Jemmy! For we who know thee are
Permitted so in love to call thee—
Born 'neath the steadfast Northern star—
May all the good in life befall thee!
Enthusiast in the English Art—
Earliest of champions and latest—
No champion's played a stouter part
To prove the English Art the greatest!

"The Art of fane and homestead, out
And in, from English floor to ceiling:
Each bit of true work round about,
Imbued with strong sweet English 'feeling!'
They wrought, did those old fellows, with
Souls steeped in beauty, long and finely—
Painter and craftsman, kin and kith,
And worshipped as they worked, divinely.



Johns. D. W. R.

OLD LIMEKILNS ON THE FORTH. (WATER-COLOUR SKETCH.) 1885



James Orrock

"And Orrock is their prophet! long
May he be ours, his worth to cherish!—
The English Art his cause and song!—
The Art he's seen revive and flourish.
And if he dotes on gems of 'Blue'
Dug from yon old celestial mine (a
Passion, James, I share with you),
Our own Art *goes* with Nankin China."

The idea which has directed the pen in the next quoted verse is not original. It is not improbable that the writer had unconsciously in his mind

"Lady! Giorgione should have painted you
With live warm flesh-tints golden through and through"¹

when he set it down. But the aptness of the application will be admitted:—

"*Paint him?* Yes. And I'll tell you how
(Frank Hals or Rembrandt would have done it)—
That shrewd wise face, that merry brow,
Should *not* be shadowed by a bonnet.
Aiblins he's Scotch. Weel, never mind;
I may be wrang—but, nae disaster
Could come to him whose pencil kind
Depicted James as Burgomaster."

Then follows a description of the two men's parts in their allied work:—

"Each in his own unrivalled way
Is master of the pencil reckoned,
Two Kings of Brentford! none can say
This James is First, or *that* is Second.
This has for subjects heroes, fair
Ladies supreme in ballad story;
That owns broad lands and waters where
Our freshening landscape keeps its glory.

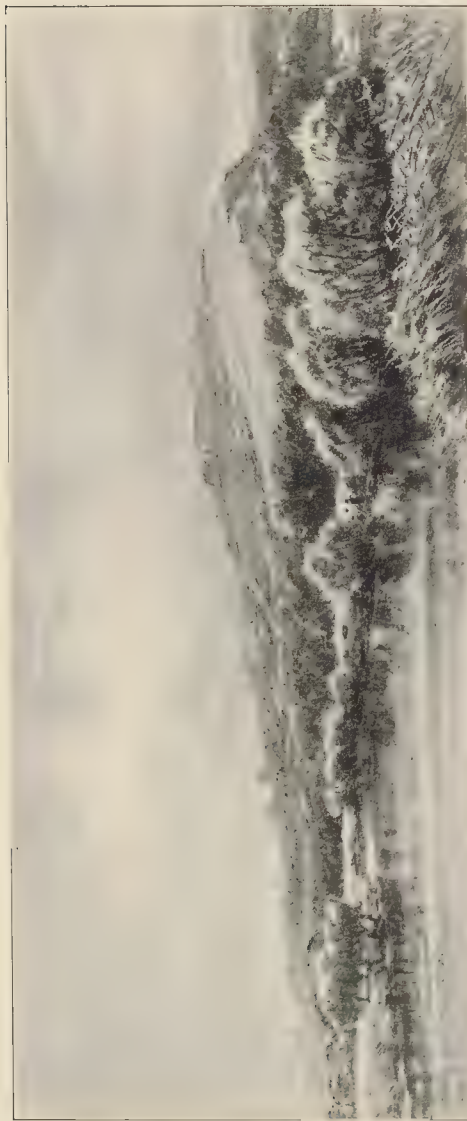
¹ Gerald Massey.

James Orrock

"The swaling plume, the gleaming blade
Of warrior, brave for love and duty :
Sweet maids in bower and hall, arrayed
For conquest in their costumed beauty ;
Court, camp, the lists ; grange, keep, and glade,
With pencil-wand our Linton peoples—
While, through the pageant and parade,
Loom Orrock's battlements and steeples.

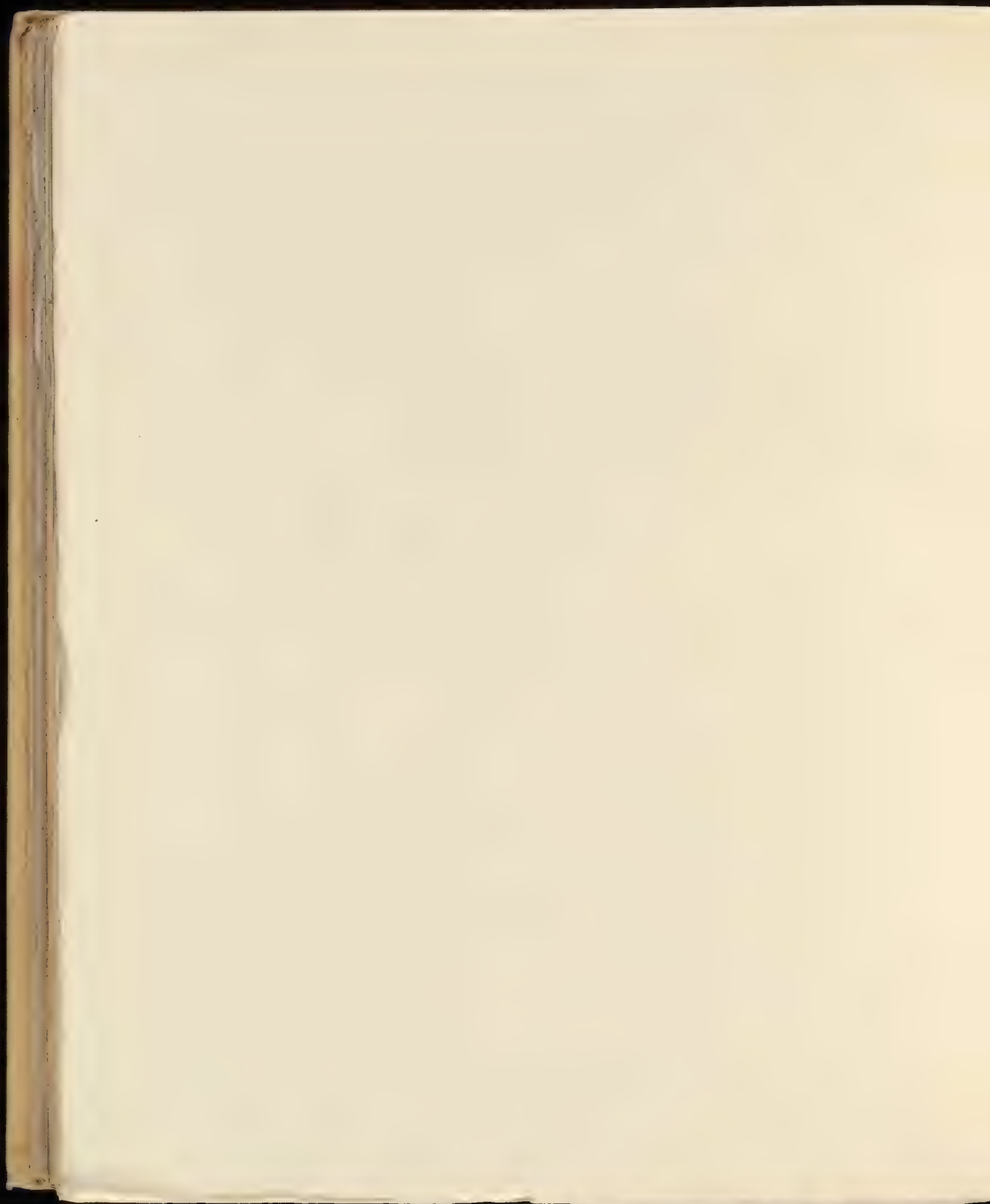
"The happy merle and throstle flute
Through Orrock's crofts, where skylarks hover :
My lady warbles to her lute
(At Linton's will) to moon and lover.
The salt wind sweeps o'er link and waste
(Orrock's dominion on the Border) ;
The Cavalier's 'to horse !' in haste,
When Linton sounds the marching order."

While he was on his sketching tour for the Border series of drawings, Mr. Orrock stayed for a time at the Red Lion Hotel kept by Mr. Carr at Berwick-on-Tweed. "I wished," says Mr. Orrock, "to visit Holy Island, Bamborough, Warkworth, and the Cheviots, and I begged Mr. Carr to provide me with a man, a horse, and a light waggonette, informing him that I should require the use of this equipment for a period of at least three months. My request was complied with and the terms of hire agreed upon. Everything was satisfactory in the appearance of the turn-out except the horse—a rather important item. This animal was no longer young, and was of the Gothic order of equine architecture. I was assured, however, that the creature was much better than he looked. Observed mine host in reply to my doubting protestations: 'You see, of late years'—the admission contained in these words was discouraging—he has done a power of work, and his architecture, as you are pleased to call it, Mr. Orrick, may therefore have become rather pointed. But treat him weel, sir, treat him weel, and you will find him a tractable and obedient beast !' Well, we set out on a lovely summer's morning, with my own manservant added to the party, and thenceforward the work I had resolved to do was accomplished without any



James Dring

STIRLING CASTLE. (WATER COLOUR SKETCH.) 1885.



James Orrock

misadventure. We went from place to place, occupying the time specified, but holding no communication meanwhile with Mr. Carr. At length we returned, and were welcomed by the landlord. He said he had been very uneasy about us, for he half feared that we had been 'drooned' in the tide of the Beal Sands, where carts and horses were sometimes overtaken and lost. 'I was sometimes so frightened, Mr. Orrick,' added he, 'that I daurna look at the paper for fear of reading that the quicksands had grippit you a' up. But, man, what hae ye dune wi' my horse, and where did ye get this bonny spanker?' 'Well, Mr. Carr,' I replied, 'you know I am an artist. I took him out a rough sketch from nature, but with bold drawing: I have brought him back a finished picture.' 'Ech man, and so he is! A bonny, not a boney picture noo. Hoo did ye dee it?' 'By following your advice,' I answered. 'By treating him well.' 'But, Mr. Orrick, my driver looks jist as weel as the horse.' 'And what for no, as Meg Dods says, when he has been living rack and manger like the rest of us,' replied I. Thereupon Mr. Carr closed the conversation with 'Noo, Mr. Orrick, d'ye ken when ye'll be coming this gate again? I would like to ken, because the next time I mean to gang wi' you mysel' and hae a share of your maut and meal, which seems to dae gude to a'body.'"

Mr. Orrock, "across the walnuts and the wine," recalls other experiences of sketching tours in Scotland and on the southern fringe of the Border. He says: "While painting for the Mary Queen of Scots' series at Dumfries, Mr. Crombie, an architectural friend of mine, who was a clever amateur sketcher, accompanied me to Threave Castle, the ancient stronghold of Archibald the Grim. My companion knew the principal tenant-farmer on the estate, and this acquaintanceship proved useful, as his farm was close to the castle. He was a genial Scot, who received us with the greatest cordiality, and proffered his services as guide to the margin of the lake upon which stands the historical ruin. Under his direction we drove our conveyance through his fields, and, after partaking of refreshment, while the umbrella tent was put up, my friend and I

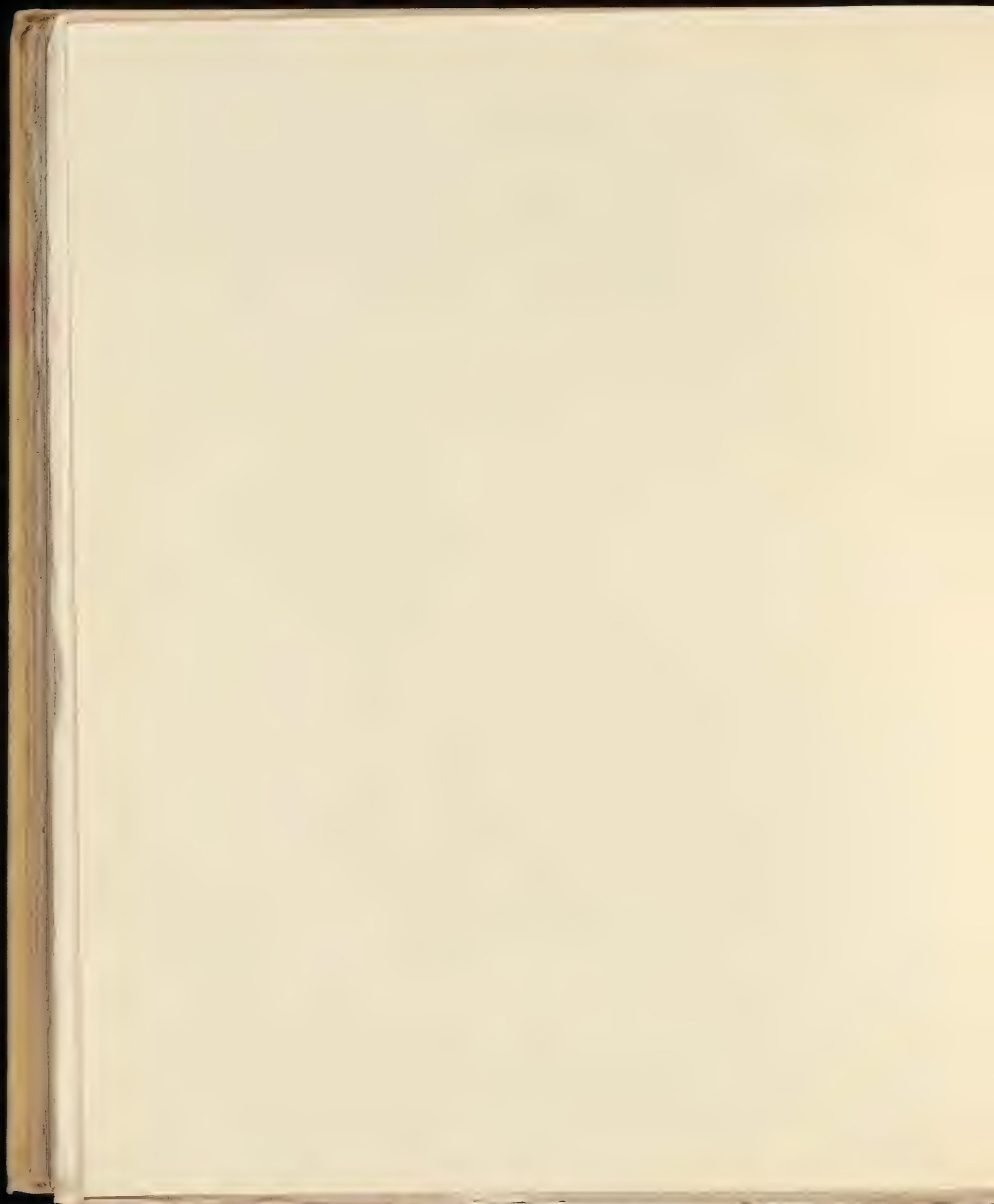
James Orrock

set to work to make our water-colour sketches. We wrought on prosperously for some hours, during which period I heard occasional reports of fowling-pieces and perceived birds of the wild duck species flying from the shooters. The reports became more distinct, and I was remarking this sign of the approaching sportsmen when my attention was drawn to an apparent altercation between one of the keepers and my servant. I heard the former exclaim, 'You have no business here, and Mr. G——, who is shooting ducks, will order you off.' Presently Mr. G—— himself, with a friend and a couple of retrievers, came up headlong, and, speaking in a loud voice, wanted to know what business I had there? I replied that we had had leave from the farmer to come through his fields. We were doing no harm, and so, with his permission, we proposed to remain until we had finished our sketches, and then return to Dumfries. 'You shall go at once! You have spoilt our sport. Your big umbrella has frightened the birds, and we have not hit one.' This, I ventured to observe, was evident, as I had not seen a duck fall to the guns. But, I added, I was not aware that sketching umbrellas made sportsmen miss their aim. 'You insolent scoundrel!' rejoined Mr. G——, 'you shall not stay here another minute. So be off, and be d——d to you! Are you going at once, or not?' 'After such coarse abuse, certainly not,' I replied; 'I defy you to lay a finger on us, for we are ready to consult the law on tenants' rights, and, as you are a magistrate, you may find yourself personally interested.' 'Then,' he furiously added, 'am I to understand that you refuse to go?' 'Yes, sir, you are. I refuse to budge an inch. I have your tenant's leave to come here, and to remain here, and on that I shall take my stand. I have had the privilege of painting in the finest parks in England, and in Scotland too, and I have always found that the artist was not only permitted to freely practise his art, but was a welcome guest at the castle or hall. No, Mr. G——, although, if you do not, you ought to belong to the race of Archibald the Grim, thank God, *you* cannot place our heads on the battlements of Threave Castle. It is my intention to ask one of the Dumfries journals to



From 1870

MARSCOE AND SLIGACHAN, ISLE OF SKYE. (WATER-COLOUR SKETCH.) 1870



James Orrock

publish a letter of mine on the subject of tenants' rights, which you would do well to read. It may cool your Border blood.' This letter appeared next morning, and led to a long and heated controversy on the subject of tenants' rights and Mr. G——'s unamiable conduct, which is remembered in the neighbourhood to this day."

And now let us pause with the sketcher on his way to Bolton Castle. One hot day in the height of summer, while Mr. Orrock was sketching near the picturesque village of Aysgarth, in Wensleydale, a sturdy individual, whose aspect was partly bucolic, partly sporting, and who was smoking a short pipe, approached unceremoniously and sat down on the dry grass close to the painter's easel. The bluff intruder had evidently not lunched or dined on teetotal principles. As the Scotch say, "the maut was abune the meal." After watching the progress of the busy brush for some time in silence, he said decisively, in a strong Wensleydale accent, "You are Corks, and you are stopping at the Palmer Flat Inn." There was the slightest possible suggestion of a question in the remark. He had made up his mind that this was the person he misnamed, and he said so in a tone that brooked no contradiction. He added, after a moment's pause, "I have heard tell o' you." Mr. Orrock admitted that he was at that time living at the sign of the Palmer Flat, but explained that his name was Orrock and not Corks. "Oh, let that bide!" explained the gentleman. "Corks or Orks is all the same to me. I have, in a manner of speaking, been looking for you. They tell'd me yonder where you were likely to be found. Now I'll just tell you what it is. I want you to mak' me a lot of pictures at my place down the dale yonder—mind you, a whole lot." Mr. Orrock thanked the admirer of his art; said that it would afford him great pleasure to engage in the work in question—all the country in that neighbourhood was so beautiful, and he knew the dale. How many drawings was his lavish commissioner likely to require? "My name is ——," rejoined the gentleman. "When you come, I'll bed you, and I'll board you, and I'll drive you about in my trap. You shall not be at the expense of a brass

James Orrock

farden. I am a brewer." Mr. Orrock hastened to state that he had recognised the brewer in the name, and to assure him that, from personal and even recent experience, he had a high opinion of his ale. "That's right enough," he rejoined; "you can swim in it, if you like, when you come to me." Mr. Orrock was at the time engaged upon a small water-colour sketch, one of the smallest he was accustomed to make from nature. Remarked the brewer, with a somewhat scornful gesture, "I don't want a pasteboard thing like that. I want them big, and I want a lot." "Yes," remarked Mr. Orrock, "but you have not said how many? Would a dozen—say of 30 by 20 inches—suit you?" "Yes," replied the brewer, "that's about the size of it. Now, then, at a word, how much for the lot? You can stamp them off quick enough. And I'll bed you, and board you, and drive you about in my trap." Mr. Orrock said that his price for a drawing of the size named would be forty guineas. "Sure-ly, Mr. Corks, that's ower much for a dozen pictures when I bed you, and board you, and drive you about in my trap!" Mr. Orrock explained that he meant forty guineas each. "Forty apiece! Forty—Lord save us! You've sobered me with your thieving. Forty apiece for the lot! Why, it's the price of forty horses—and good ones, too. You've sobered me clean. I'm off!" He arose and fled. Mr. Orrock was afterwards informed that not a moment stopped nor stayed he; but, with a flushed and ill-used mien, went straight home to his residence down the dale at the rate of five miles an hour. The relation of the incident afforded much amusement at the Palmer Flat, where the brewer was well known. The disappointed and outraged patron of the water-colour art was rallied a good deal on the matter, but he never could be brought to see it in a tolerant or complacent light. In fact, he invariably spoke of "that man Corks" as "a madman and a swindler."

To accomplish in Shakespeare's country that which to the best of his ability he had done for the land of Sir Walter Scott, had long been one of Mr. Orrock's most cherished desires. The opportunity came, after repeated disappointments, in the summer of

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1894. He took up his quarters at the Warwick Arms in that fine old English city, after he had tried other places in the neighbourhood and found them unsuitable. The Warwick Arms is a hostelry of a rare kind. The town itself has been, as it were, "left" by Birmingham on the one hand and Leamington on the other, in the march of what is called improvement. There is not a quieter town in Shakespeare's England. The tide of advancing civilisation rolls on its broadening way, but leaves Warwick a tranquil backwater of a place, rich in romantic and historical associations, and conserved by citizens who discourage the modern improver and jerry-builder, maintain their outward and visible environment, and keep their beloved capital intact. Friends from London who dropped in upon Mr. Orrock after his day's sketching of farmstead and grange, manor-house and river-reaches, woodland, pasture and fields of golden grain, each with its touch of Shakespeare on it, found him in perfect comfort and at home. There was mine host, Mr. Sherrey, with his old-fashioned notions of how the business of an old inn, founded on an old-fashioned cellar, should be conducted; there, too, was Mrs. Sherrey, a veritable Meg Dods in culinary matters; and there, also, was the regular bar-parlour company, with its interesting American element. Not a few of the tourists who had that year crossed the Atlantic and were eager to find the footprints of Shakespeare were indebted to Mr. Orrock for guidance. He mapped out routes and devised for them day-journeys showing, as any sensible explorer of the Shakespeare country would, that the road was to be chosen in preference to the rail. Mr. Orrock was never happier in his work. If Warwick found him out, as Warwick speedily did, and tempted him to a public banquet where, with little reluctance, he was induced in an eloquent speech to extol Warwick and the Warwick country—the splendid centre of Shakespeare's land—it only made the work upon which he was engaged go the smoother. A visit to Oldham to take part in the opening of an art gallery and deliver an address was the only break in Mr. Orrock's delightful employment. At

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the end of the allotted time, when sketching out of doors had become precarious, Mr. Orrock returned to London with a large number of drawings, but without having completed his design. The more he had seen of this beautiful centre of England the more enamoured had he become with it, with an augmented sense of the necessity of devoting another season to the work. With that intention, he bade adieu to his studio at the Warwick Arms. He would be back again the following year. It was not to be. It is a deplorable fact that, owing to an accident which impaired his eyesight and illnesses that followed, he has been unable since his sojourn at Warwick not only to fulfil his original intention with regard to that delightful sketching ground, but to accomplish anything like an average summer's work elsewhere.



Arundel Castle and the Gate of the River.

CHAPTER XXIII

Mr. Orrock's essay on Constable—The exhibition of old masters at Burlington House—Mr. Horsley, R.A.—His admiration of the impressionist "Bergholt Mill"—Exhibition of the work at Burlington House—Mr. G. D. Leslie's denunciation of that and another work as forgeries—Mr. Orrock's reply—Legal proceedings on the part of Mr. Orrock abandoned on the intercession of Mr. Leslie's friends—History of the picture—The Englehearts, an artistic family—Mr. Robert C. Leslie an early appreciator of Constable—Mr. G. D. Leslie, R.A., an earlier—The market argument—Further exhibition of the picture at the New Gallery and at the Munich Exhibition—M. Henri Rochefort's admiration—A Royal Academician's opinion.

MR. ORROCK has allied himself, by an ardent appreciation founded on a singularly intimate experience and knowledge of their work, with many English masters, but with none in his beloved school more intimately than John Constable. It is his wont to say, "I am a Constable man." The influence of the painter on Mr. Orrock's performances in landscape has, with that of De Wint and David Cox, been remarked by most of his critics. An early love, his affection for Constable's art has grown into something like devotion to a master who was so English in his simple might. There is a charm in tracing the advancing handiwork of Constable through the "periods" of his effort which perhaps none but the entirely kindred spirit can feel. He had more periods, or, let us say, more moods than were exhibited by Turner himself, and yet the departures from what is commonly known as "the Constable manner," are so distinct and yet so subtle, that their recognition is difficult, not to say impossible, to all but the thorough "Constable" connoisseur. In the appreciation which follows, one of the essays which he contributed to the *Art Journal*, he expounds his opinion of the famous English master and his works.

"John Constable, now the most celebrated, if not actually accounted the greatest, of English landscape painters, was during

James Orrock

his life despised and neglected. Considering his social advantages it seems incredible that such should have been the case, for not only had he the gift of genius and the rank of Royal Academician, but his connections were people of consequence, who, by their influence, found buyers for his pictures. Among these was his best friend and supporter, Archdeacon Fisher of Salisbury. Mr. Fisher did not content himself with everywhere lauding Constable's talent, but by the purchase of 'The White Horse' rendered the painter a service which was of the utmost importance to him at a crisis of his life.

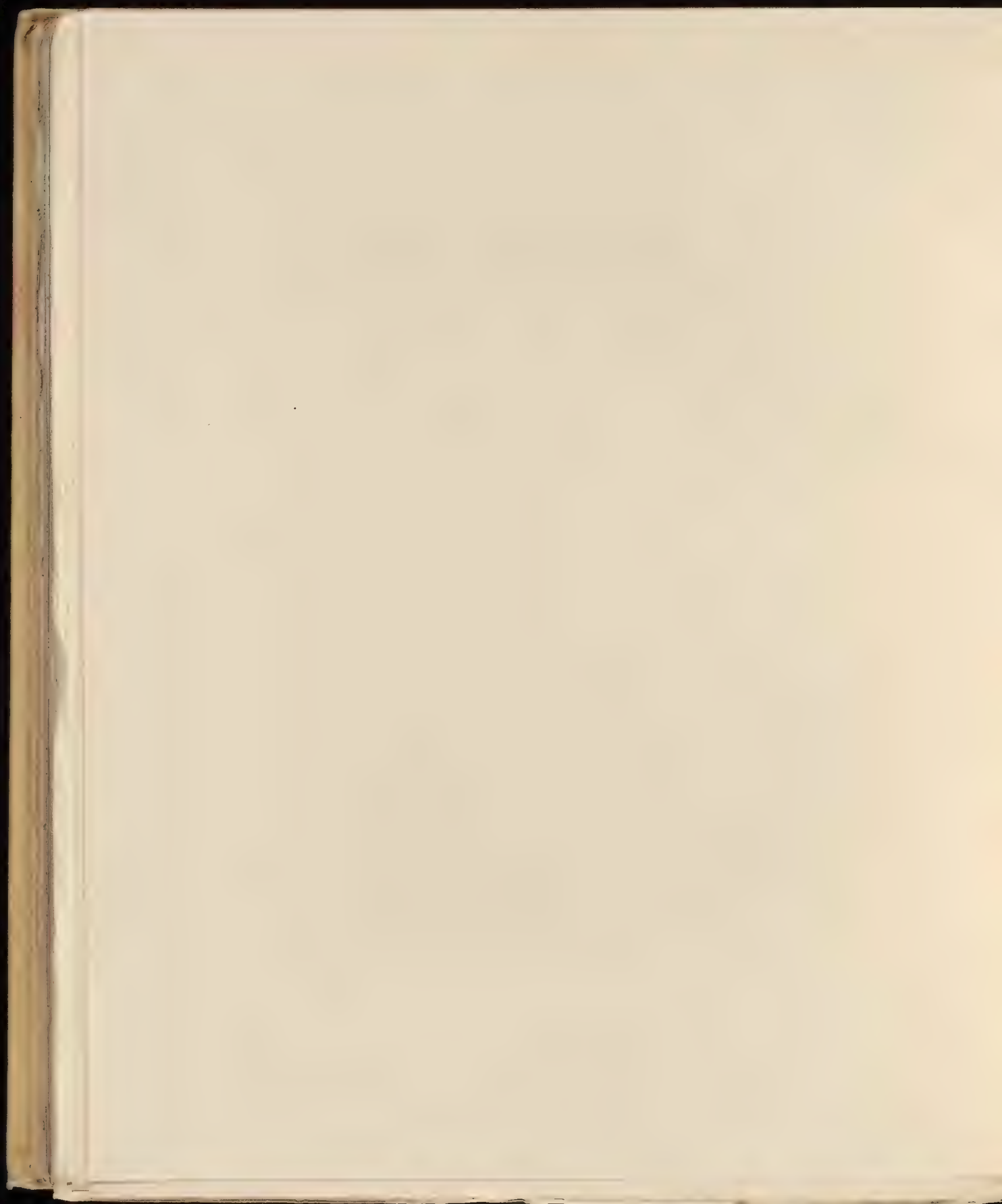
"It was reserved, however, for the French to have the honour of raising Constable to his pedestal. In a letter to Archdeacon Fisher he says: 'My Frenchman has sent his agent with the money for the pictures,' which, Constable adds, 'look uncommonly well, and which he hopes will melt the stony hearts of the French painters.' He had his wish, for after the sale of those pictures, which were of large size, the buyer engaged him to paint seven others of smaller dimensions for the Paris buyers. The large pictures, which were exhibited at the Louvre, caused Constable's work to be 'looked for at Paris.' Mr. Brockedon, in a letter to Constable, states that the French have been forcibly struck by them, and they have created a *division* in the school of the landscape painters in France. They, however, accused him of carelessness in the work, but freely acknowledged the freshness and striking effect of the paintings; moreover, he says that the next exhibition in Paris will teem with imitators.

"Constable's prices at this time were absurdly low; imagine, for instance, the grand work called 'The Lock' being sold to Mr. Morrison, on the opening day of the Academy, for one hundred and fifty guineas 'including the frame.' It is more than probable that £15,000 would now be freely given for such an example of Constable's genius. We are informed that 'the Frenchman' agreed to pay £250 for two of the large pictures, and that Constable gave him a small one of 'Yarmouth' into the bargain.

"The critics of that day were, to a man, down on Constable.



The Villa of the Marquis.



James Orrock

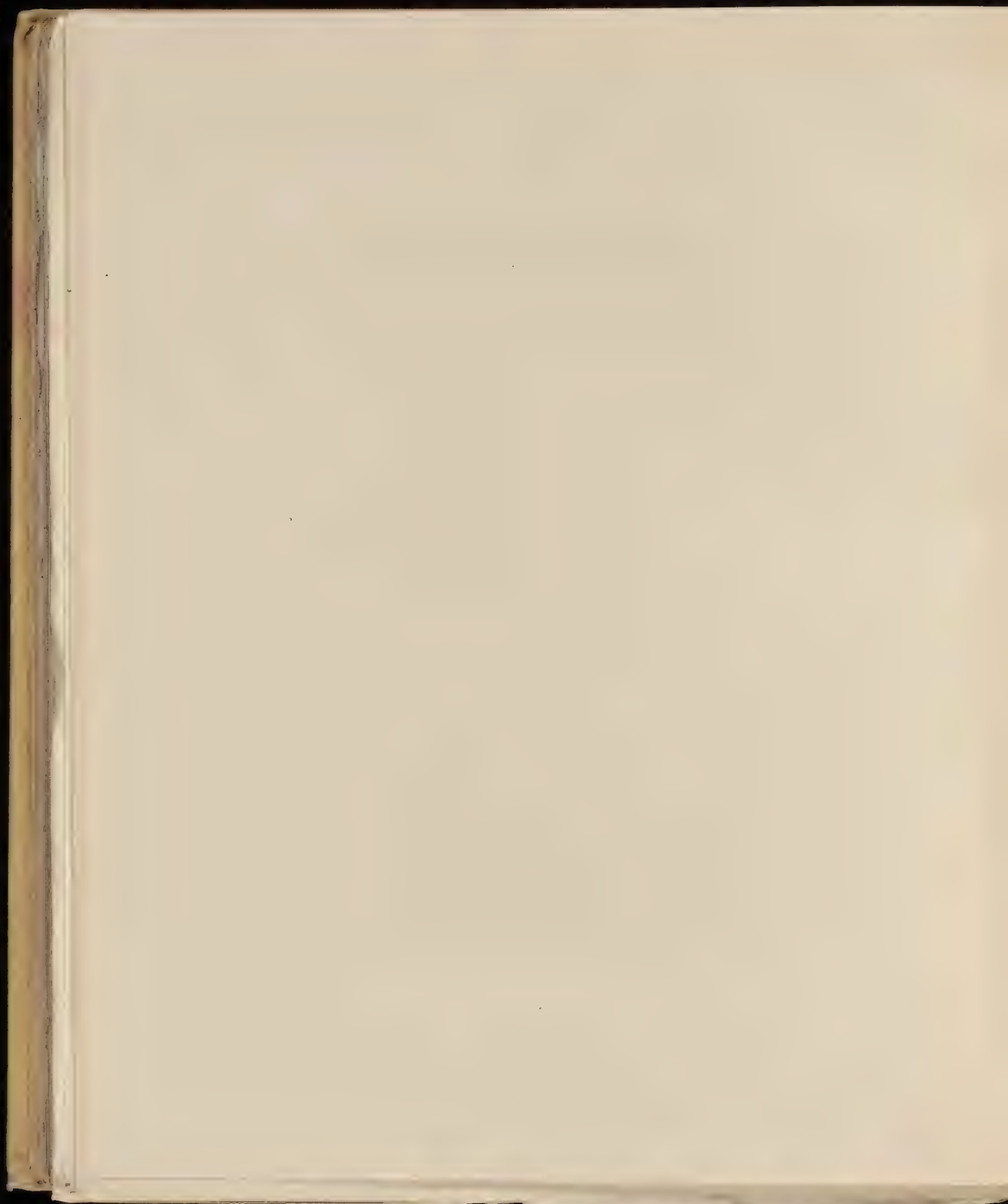
He says: 'My execution annoys most of them, as well as all the scholastic ones.' He adds: 'Perhaps the sacrifices I make for lightness and brightness are too great, but these qualities are the essence of landscape painting, and my extreme is better than white-lead and oil, and dado painting.' Dado or flat, dull, monotonous work, was foreign to Constable's nature; his aim being always to produce the *chiaroscuro* which is ever present in nature, that charm of depth and glow which Rembrandt and the colourists invariably fought for. Constable's pictures are fashionable now, but it is more than probable that there are as few who know them as there were in his day; his name and fame, however, are widespread, and his pictures are eagerly sought for in London, Paris, and New York. The French lead the American taste, and before long they will make more of our masters famous. This will happen when they know the pictures of Wilson, Turner, Crome, Cotman, De Wint, Cox, and a host of other English painters. The judgment of the French is the court of appeal. The English, singularly enough, in the main cannot even appreciate the genius of their own painters. It is remarkable, indeed, that a nation which is denounced as barbarous in matters of fine art should, at intervals, have produced poets and painters of world-wide renown, whom their own countrymen have invariably delighted to *dishonour*! It is something against this to have sent forth a champion who has virtually divided the French landscape school, and in addition has founded the most fashionable and costly school of modern times. Constable is still their head-master, however, and will continue to be so. However beautiful and skilful the Barbizon painters may be, Constable and our other great artists are always more luminous, as well as richer and finer in colour. Constable's own words may be cited. He says: 'Chiaroscuro is the only thing to be obtained, and at whatever cost; my pictures shall have chiaroscuro, if they have nothing else.' In this respect, therefore, and in the reflex of the freshness of nature, Constable is the head and front.

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"Constable had several modes of work, as all anxious inquirers after processes for expression in painting must have. He had almost as many methods, and as many periods in his work in oil, as Turner himself. One day he would paint on the clean canvas, but always laid in a ground of burnt umber, tempered with richer or cooler colours. He would paint at another time on a deep, rich red ground, for here and there the preparation is plainly visible. Even through the blues and greys of his skies the rich ground is to be distinctly traced. Sometimes, for *texture*, he would cover his canvases, chiefly small, with a cream-coloured impasto, which he would paint with a rough hog-hair brush, and leave it with its markings to dry hard. Very frequently he worked on the common dark mill-board of commerce, after glazing the surface with size. *Tone* and chiaroscuro were always aimed for, qualities which nowadays are often scorned, as if they did not exist in nature! After painting on these boards with firm and rich colours, he would steadily ascend the chromatic scale, until he reached the reflected pearl lights of the sky, or the sparkle after rain. He left no chord unsounded, but rose from the ground-floor to the skylight of his art. To gain the freshness and dewy feeling of nature, he frequently sacrificed the breadth and repose of his pictures; for all know that sunshine scatters light and shade, and Constable and Cox were the only masters who strove to adapt this law to the laws of their art. When Constable painted broad and solemn effects with the brush, without the aid of the palette-knife, he was frequently dark and heavy; and these pictures in consequence are often challenged as to their genuineness by the majority. Only the best experts know these Constable pictures. Indeed, as always, the painter's 'voice,' namely his colour, is the only safe guide; for the technique and general arrangements of the composition follow as a matter of course. His force and delicacy do not appeal to those who have neither brains nor brawn—the effeminate weaklings—nor to those who paint loud stage-effects out of time and tune like the blare of a German band,



A Woodland Scene.



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nor to those, moreover, who have not eyes to discern the subtle qualities which lie deep under the surface of any object of art whatever, whether it be in paint, porcelain, metal, or marble. They only see something big in nature, thunderous clouds, and striking contrasts of light and dark in the landscape. They are attracted by elephantine grandeur, but cannot look through the polarised-lighted microscope at nature's colouring, and study her wondrous infinities at the other end of the scale. In a word, they are deaf and blind to that 'still, small voice of 'quality,' which is ever present in every phase of nature. The only true students, as I cannot say too often, are the 'leaveners,' who are deep thinking and keenly observant, and who call on the people to accept their verdict, as a great scientist does, as a matter of *faith*. The majority, indeed, live on faith alone.

"Constable, in what may be called his Constable-period, greatly indulged in the vagaries of the palette-knife, which instrument he used with singular dexterity. He painted with it to such an excess, however, that it was wittily said he had cut his throat with it. He may have done this, but it is certain he killed his traducers, for the sickly and puerile productions of many of his opponents could not stand up in the presence of his brilliant knife operations. He painted, however, in his early and middle periods, with the brush, and afterwards adopted the use of the palette-knife to carry out the instincts of his nature, viz. to produce the *light* he saw everywhere before him. The pungent remarks about his use of the palette-knife induced him for a time greatly to modify its adoption, but he soon broke through his resolve, and, fortunately for the world, painted, drew, and modelled with it with greater effect than ever. He knew that the living light of the 'Leaping Horse' and 'Dedham Vale,' for instance, dulled and deadened all his brush-work, and he was, therefore, only happy when he was carrying out his unconquerable idiosyncrasy. Constable's art is therefore the most brilliant beacon in the school of landscape painting! Palette-knife work such as Constable's has an accident and vivacity which correspond to the

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'left' lights in water-colour painting. Those lights are jewelled, as it were, and may be called nature's brilliants. They are the ringing treble notes of the gamut of Art, and as Constable resolved to play the whole scale, he began with the rich deep notes in nature's diapason, and played up to the silver tones with the palette-knife, in the treble clef of dazzling cloud and dewy meadow. In truth, he was so enthralled with nature's chromatic scale, from the tremble of the swell to her high notes in alt, and he frequently struck the chords with such force and vigour, that his audience started and felt that he was coarse and violent. He was coarse and violent apparently, when compared with the flaccid and peevish work of many of his contemporaries; but nature was his prompter, and she fired him in his work. Those gold and silver ores, which he often used in their pristine state, so fascinated him in his love for broken tones that few, very few, could follow him. The electric lamp he carried was too dazzling for them.

"The celebrated Constable in my own possession, which was maligned as 'palette-knife scrapings' when it was exhibited in London, is one of that class; a palette-knife picture of extraordinary power, but, of course, not meant for the dull unseeing eye. The large oil sketch at South Kensington Museum of the 'Leaping Horse' is another example of the great impressionist's work, and may be said, with others similar, to form the high bar for the feats of this great Art athlete. Those startling effects, however, as all true men know, were painted to keep the finished work up to pitch. We know that no finished work can rival the brilliancy and *abandon* of a sketch, because the suggestiveness of the rapid impression is flattened and saddened by the refining process of *so-called* finish. If the polishers ask for what they ignorantly call 'refinement' from Constable, they might as reasonably ask for his life; for the soul which dwelt within his own mystic circle was the reflex of the Constable mind, and his alone, which in its function produced the qualities he saw in nature, namely, strength, depth, brilliancy, and vitality.

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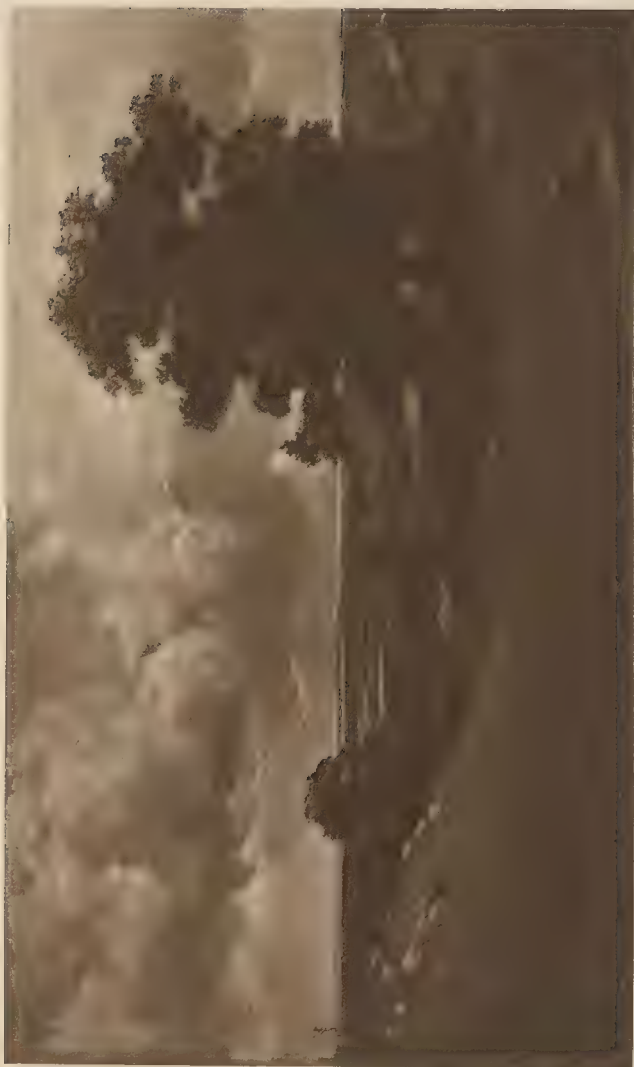
"Constable was a striking figure, and a painter of high degree, whose art added one more gem to the diadem of English landscape painting. He has filled the vacant niche which was left for him, and it is impossible to imagine any other feature of landscape art which could so nobly have filled that niche. Curiously enough, the two great masters, Constable in oil and Hunt in water-colours, were experts with the knife—their objects being the same. They strove to produce the brilliancy of the high lights of nature, and to carry these through the work: these are known as the 'travelling lights.' Constable laid on the colours with the palette-knife, and dexterously *drew* and modelled with it over the under-prepared ground. Hunt, being a water-colour painter, took out passages with a sharp-cutting knife. The colours were then dropped into the spaces, and mosaicked, as it were, to give effect and contrast. Constable seemed born for a palette-knife painter, and he shines out among his French disciples who painted with the brush and made their otherwise beautiful works look dull and flat by comparison.

"As a draughtsman Constable was below Turner, Gainsborough, Müller, and Bonington; and, indeed, many more of our masters. He never had the grace and swiftness of those painters, and always showed, as it were, a heavy hand—masculine and muscular to a degree—but never so sensitive and aerial as the hand of Turner, Cox, or Müller. By force, dash, and brilliancy, he would storm the citadel; he was a fighting and fearless, and not a persuasive man. Constable frequently painted in water-colours, but his real medium was oil. He could never have become a consummate water-colourist, because he was not delicate enough either in colouring or in drawing with the point. He could not, for example, draw with a swift and ringing touch in *outline* the Salisbury Cathedral of which he was so fond, like many of our masters, and was unable, therefore, like Turner, to show the crisp and nervous outline of such a building *through* the overlaid colouring of the drawing. However, as I have said, he had other qualities—markedly Constable qualities—which made him a beacon of our school. Above all, in his art he

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was, like Morland, English of the English; he painted his meadows and homesteads with a loving heart. The silver streams, bordered with sedges, and reeds, and willows, were never truly painted till Constable came; and one day, when locks and barges and quaint old gabled mills and farmsteads have given place to bald and formal structures which the steam-engine will have called into existence, his landscapes will be historical. Sir Thomas Lawrence, the generous and gifted president of the Royal Academy, unconsciously made Constable wince when the latter called upon him to express his gratitude for his election to the rank of Royal Academician. Sir Thomas told Constable he might consider himself fortunate in receiving such a mark of distinction, because there were several *historical* painters of promise waiting for admission. The distinguished portrait painter was blind to the fact that the greatest historical painter among them *had* been elected! He could not conceive that Constable's historical landscapes would one day be of great value for their faithful delineation of the *actual* scenes before him. He had no costumed models or imaginings of accessories, no building-up or inventions of the past; on the contrary, he had God's landscapes before him, with the habits and costumes of the people who lived in them. What would not we give for such a translator of Shakespeare's time, with the parks and manor-houses, and figures of the period in every station of life, to enrich and people the scenes? Yes, Constable, like Hogarth and Morland, was an historical painter, although not of the class Sir Thomas had in his mind.

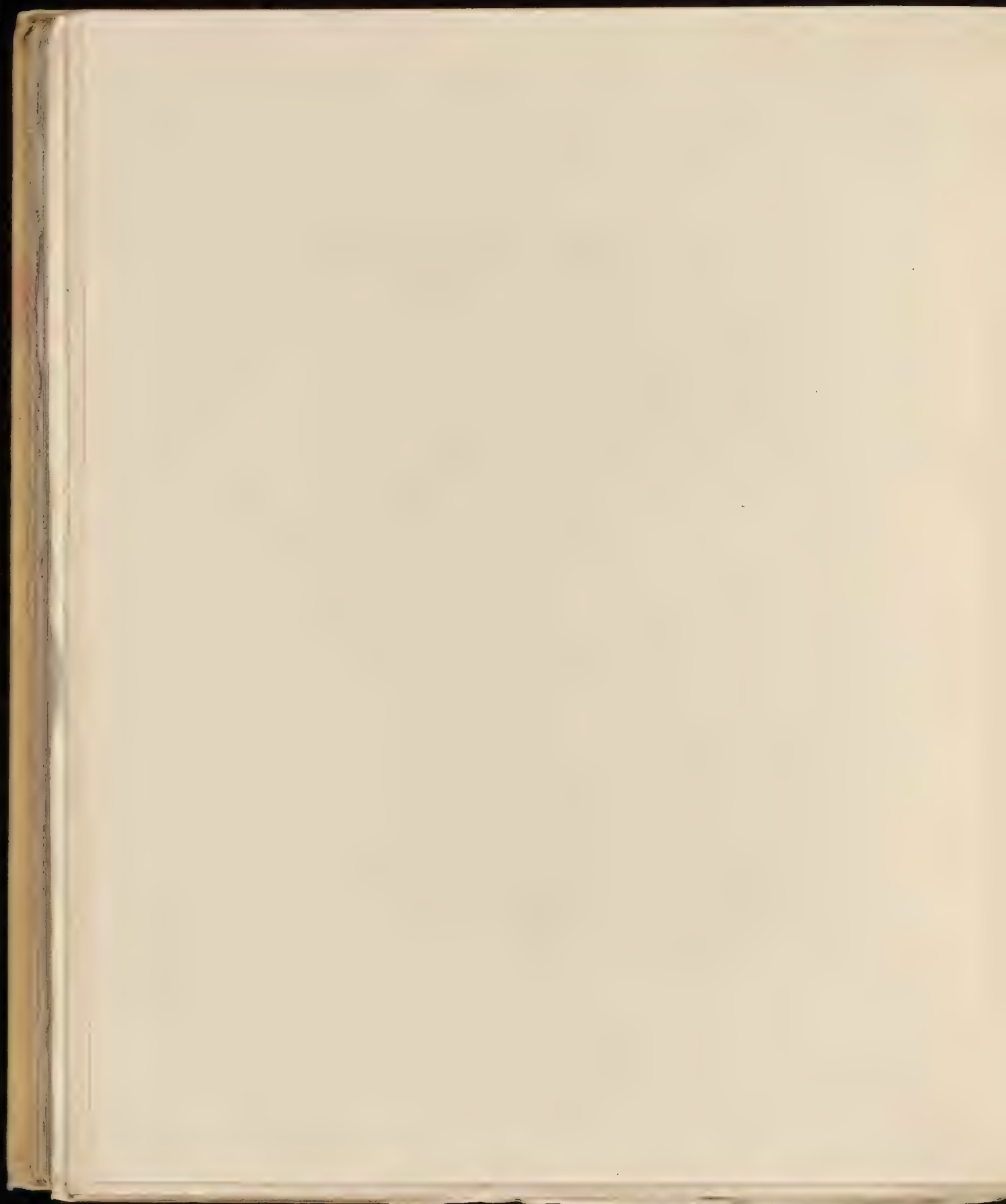
"It has frequently been claimed, as a crown to the genius of Turner, that he never repeated himself. In the main this is not true, for Turner's effects were often repeated, and his peculiarities of technique and arrangement of lines and masses were always Turneresque. Constable certainly, like Richard Wilson—whose genius is second to none—continually repeated himself; for we have as many 'Dedhams' and 'Locks on the Stour' as we have 'Lake Nemis' and 'White Monks,' by Wilson, and 'Going to



The Garden

The Garden

Summer Time.



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the Hayfield,' by Cox, with white horses and figures to make up the theme. Many argue, however, that this repetition of subjects exhibits a state of perfection such as is constantly found in the work of a mechanic or specialist whose life has been devoted to the making of one thing only. Hunt and Hine in water-colours, for instance; although they never *literally* reproduced the same picture, their perfection of skill is chiefly due to their repetitions and to their command of the materials at their disposal.

"Certain it is that no 'Dedhams' or 'Hampsteads' have ever been painted with the force and brilliancy of the reflex of nature shown in those by Constable. Listen to his words: 'None of the great painters were *eccentric* in their work.' Again: 'There never was a boy-painter, nor could there be; the art requires a long apprenticeship, being *mechanical* as well as intellectual.' Mannerists are cunning people, and the misfortune is, the public are not able to discriminate between their pictures and true painting. He cared little for the usual classifications of art, he judged by intrinsic merit alone. Good art was with him high art, however *humble* the subject; and mediocre art, let the attempts be ever so sublime, was in his estimation low art.

"All men of genius are akin, however dissimilar their productions, but genius and mediocrity have nothing in common. Raphael and Ostade may be classed together, but never Raphael and Carlo Marrata. Constable had another pithy saying: 'He felt that the supernatural need not be unnatural.' An artist who undervalued every class of Art but the heroic, said he could not conceive to what Jan Steen owed his great reputation, unless to the high encomiums Sir Joshua Reynolds had passed on his style. Constable replied: 'And could he owe it to a better authority?' Speaking of the taste for the prodigious and astounding, he replied: 'Genius is in the still small voice.'

"Constable, like Turner, was a great admirer of Wilson, with whose sufferings he had a strong sympathy. Constable lectured as well as painted, and said many things of great weight. After

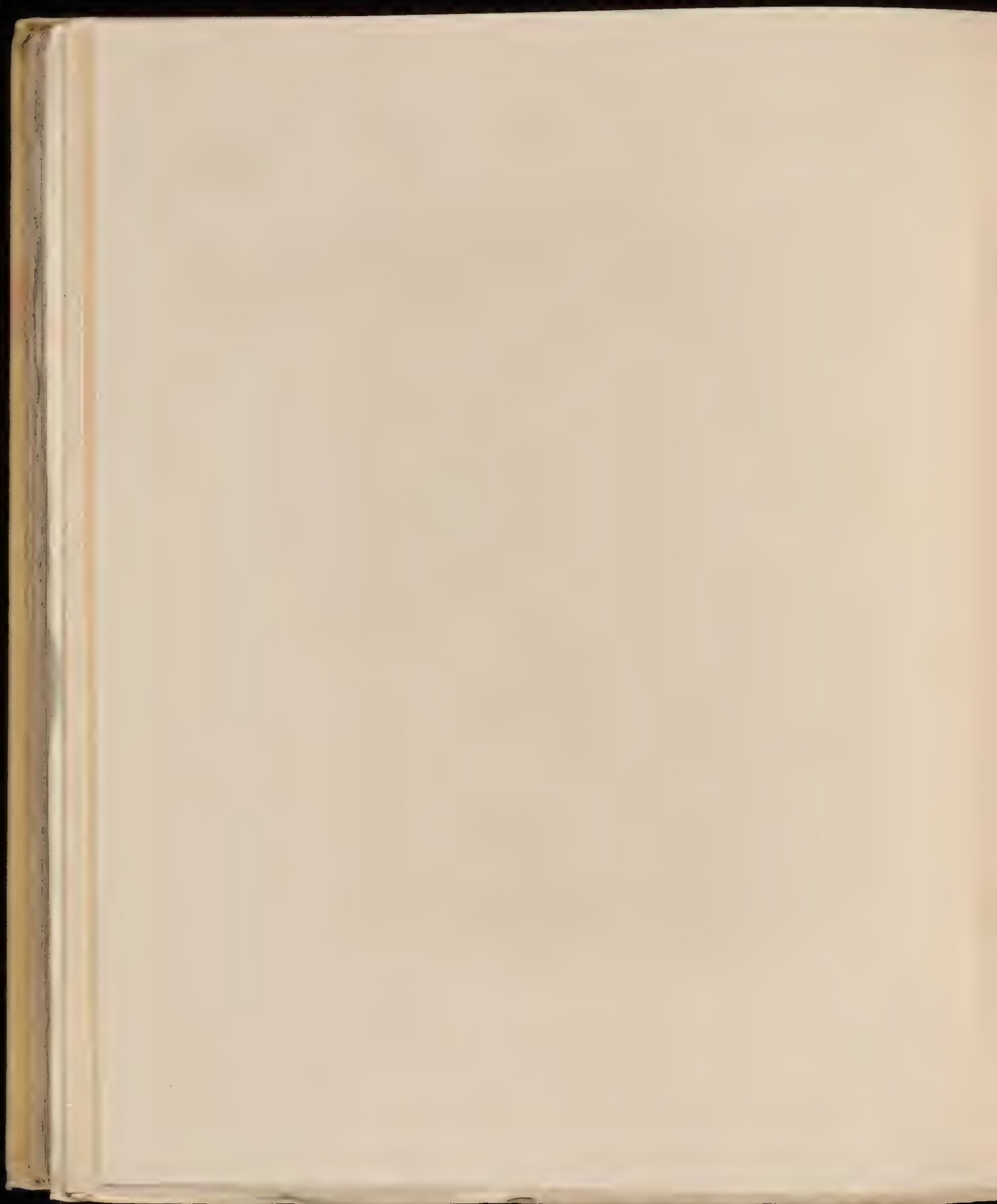
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speaking of Rembrandt, Ruysdael, and Cuyp, he says on the death of these great men the art rapidly declined, and during almost the whole of the succeeding century, little was produced beyond mannered and feeble imitations of their art. From this degraded and fallen state, it is delightful to say that the art of landscape painting revived in our own country in its purity, simplicity, and grandeur in the works of Wilson, Gainsborough, Cozens, and Girtin. Those painters have become points, marking the epochs of landscape, and corresponding numerically with those of the eminent men who have materially enlarged the boundaries of each of the other departments in Art, Literature, and Science.

"He speaks of Wilson as opening the way to the genuine principles of landscape in England; he appeared at a time when this art, not only here but on the Continent, was entirely in the hands of the mannerists. It is gratifying to water-colour painters to hear the words of Constable about their art. He praises Cozens and Girtin, and says they possessed genius of the very highest order, though their works are comparatively few, and in water-colours only. Like all great artists, Constable was not only a keen observer but a deep thinker. He was continually studying nature, and pondering over the best modes and methods of expressing her characteristics. He knew the great art of the masters, and founded his style on theirs. Like the Dutch, he was a stay-at-home, but he studied and absorbed all the fine Art he could see, and gradually formed his own style with the help of nature. He knew that many travelled and talked, but *few* could really read what they saw and talked about. Many know, as they call it, the collections in Europe, but how many can absorb the true knowledge like a thirsty artistic soul? The non-appreciation of his work during his life was a great grief to Constable, and he complained bitterly of this neglect. He says of himself that he is 'totally unpopular, and will be on this side the grave; the subjects are nothing but Art, and the buyers wholly ignorant of



*View near Edinburgh
painted from Nature*



James Orrock

that; my art flatters nobody by imitation, it courts nobody by smoothness, tickles nobody by petiteness, it is without either fal-de-lal or fiddle-de-dee; then, how can I hope to be popular?'

"His house was filled with his unsold pictures, and courting notice, he advertised, 'Mr. Constable's Gallery of Landscapes, by his own hand, is to be seen gratis daily by application at his residence.' When the French decreed that Constable was a great painter, the French king gave him a medal to confirm their verdict. *We* had, therefore, to wait for the foreigner to acknowledge this hitherto despised genius, and this genius an Englishman, one who had painted the most un-sad, un-leathery, un-sleepy, but otherwise life-like, bright-eyed, Argus-eyed, silver-seamed landscapes in the world. To-day, even, we are despising and degrading the memories of others of our great painters whose names will before long be brought forward probably by the French again, and be household words in every land. To begin with, we ourselves ought at least to take means to preserve from destruction the English pictures we already possess in our public galleries. In the National Gallery, to wit, we are told by high authority that in consequence of the English pictures having been painted with bitumen, nothing can be done to save them. It is certain, however, that so far little has been done to try and save them!

"Constable was one of that band of masters and martyrs in Art which included among others the names of Wilson, Crome, De Wint, Cox, and Holland. Among the unsold pictures at Constable's death was the famous 'Cornfield,' now in the National Gallery, which his friend Mr. Purton urged should be secured for the National Collection. On August 21st, 1837, Mr. Purton writes to a friend: 'I have had this day the melancholy gratification of again visiting the gallery of our lamented friend Constable. The great number of his works left in his possession proves too clearly how little his merits were felt by those who could afford and ought to have possessed them.' Mr. Purton adds: 'I fear unless some means are adopted to save the pictures, they will fall into the

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hands of artists only, for a mere trifle, and will remain buried, till dug up and brought to light in another age.'

"Mr. John Wigzell, of Maddox Street, whose experience, together with that of his late partner, Mr. D. T. White, as to Constable's pictures, extends over more than half a century, possesses a catalogue, probably unique, of that celebrated collection of which Mr. Purton writes, with the names of the purchasers, and the prices of the pictures affixed. The date of the catalogue is May 15, 1838, and the sale was at Fosters', in Pall Mall. This catalogue and Leslie's Life of Constable do not quite agree in some most important particulars. For instance, 'The White Horse,' which had been sold to Archdeacon Fisher, is among the pictures for sale in this catalogue, and is named as having been exhibited in the Academy in 1819. The 'Lock,' also, which was purchased (see Leslie's Life) by Mr. Morrison from Constable out of the Academy Exhibition in 1824, is also named in the 1838 Catalogue for sale among Constable's possessions. Here, indeed, is a mystery which may one day be solved. Mr. Wigzell thinks, after Constable came into his fortune, he may have bought some of his grand pictures back, as Turner did in the case of 'Sun rising in a Mist,' and others. Mr. Golding Constable had a great objection to his son's being an artist, consequently the young genius had to attend to the mill business at Bergholt, and paint and study from nature when he could. No artist could have kept his studies within a more limited area than Constable, but Providence had made him one of the chosen, and, like John Bunyan and William Hunt, had shut him up for a great purpose. Although the space for his study was limited to a few hundred yards round Bergholt and Flatford, this space contained the materials for the greatest pastoral pictures in the world. Here Constable found the subjects for 'The Lock,' 'The White Horse,' Hay-Wain,' 'Willy Lotts' House,' 'Valley Farm,' 'Young Waltonians,' and many more. He was, as it were, imprisoned there—at least, he chose to make it appear so; but, in reality, he centred his genius to the pictorial develop-

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ment of the scenery he knew best and loved most. It is said he knew every tree for miles round Bergholt, and had names for most of them. He got by heart the tones and tints of those silvery willows and sedgy-banked streams, these forming a setting to the pearl-sky reflections, which apparently glided along, and were lost and found again among the 'faint, sweet, cuckoo flowers, and wild marsh marigolds,' in the 'swamps and hollows grey' of the Bergholt meadows. He had, too, by heart the mills and locks and barges which he could draw and paint from memory. Listen to the master, and he will explain his imprisonment. 'The sound of water escaping from mill-dams, willows, old rotten planks, slimy posts, and old brickwork; I love such things, and painting with me is another word for feeling; I associate my careless boyhood with all that lies on the banks of the Stour; these scenes made me a painter, and I am thankful.'

"In November 1819, Constable was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy, and it is probable that his large picture called 'The White Horse,' which was exhibited at the Academy in that year, may have gained him the honour. The Academy, however, did not appear to have greatly valued the new Associate, for there was an interval of ten years between his election as Associate and his election to full membership. At page 63 in Leslie's Life of John Constable is the following: 'On the 10th of February 1829, Constable was elected an Academician.' That this distinction should not have been conferred on him at a much earlier period of his life, is a proof that the progress of an original style of Art, in the estimation even of artists, is very slow. No painter of equal genius was ever less known in his own country.

"In a letter to Miss Bicknell, his future wife, May 24, 1812, Constable says: 'I have always succeeded best with my native scenes; they have always charmed me and always will; *I have now a path marked out distinctly for myself, and I am desirous of pursuing it uninterruptedly.*' This path Constable found on the banks of the Stour and followed it, and painted its dewy freshness and

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sunlit shimmer *in oil* beyond the record of his predecessors. Strangely enough, artists kept him back in England, but artists brought him forward in France. Prejudice, no doubt, among the leaders in Art, including Sir Thomas Lawrence, and it may be even Turner himself, caused this neglect, and Sir George Beaumont, with his pedantry, of course added his influence against him. This was proved when Sir George urged upon Constable the necessity of painting his pictures the colour of a Cremona fiddle. Constable replied by placing a fiddle on the lawn at Coleorton Hall, and appealed to nature to judge between them.

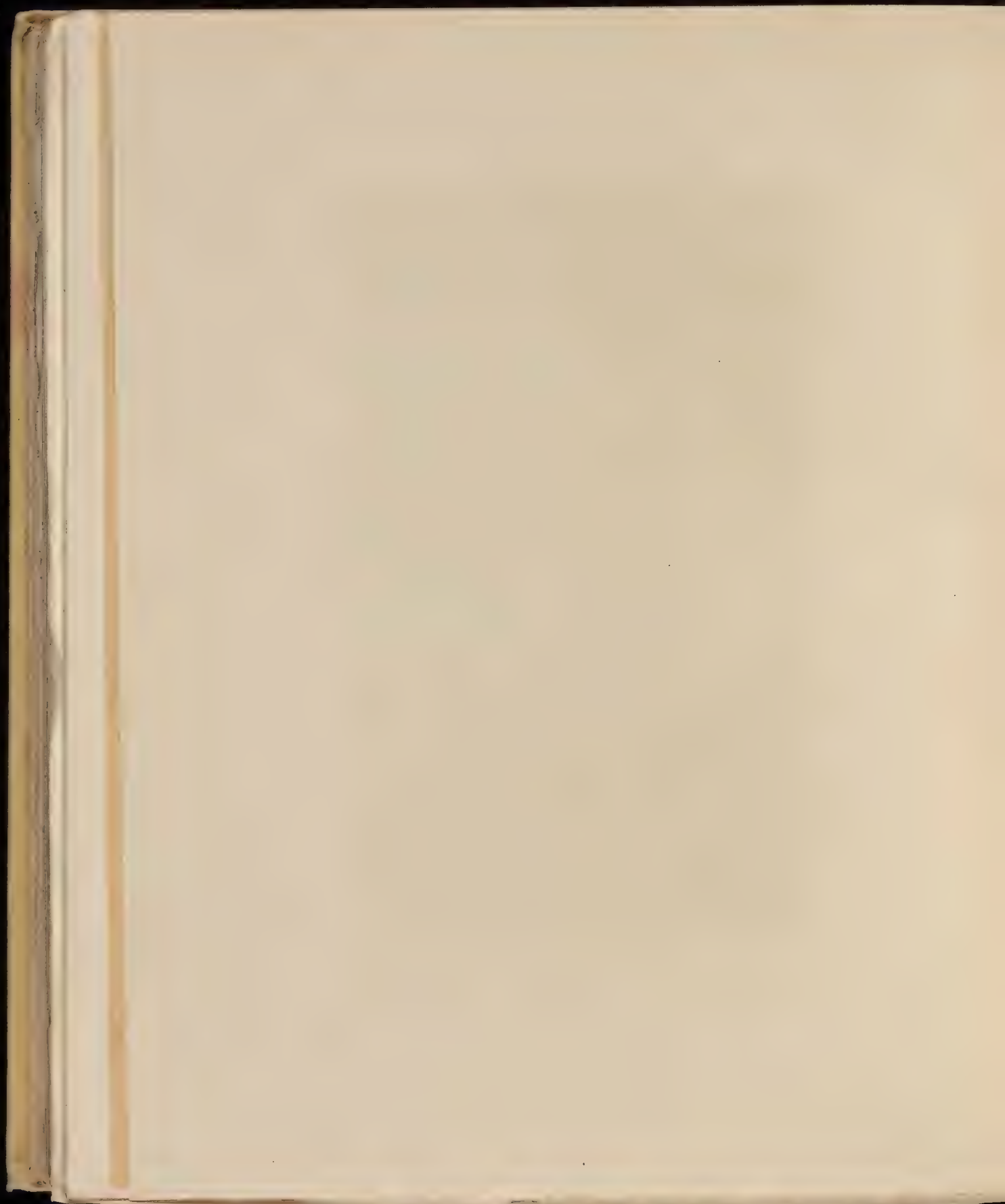
"The Academy, too, has been blamed for the neglect of Constable, but it must be allowed that he was elected by a majority or he could never have been an Academician. I end with the great English pastoral painter's own impressive words: 'The landscape painter must walk in the fields with a humble mind; no arrogant man was ever permitted to see nature in all her beauty.'"

This appears to be the most appropriate place to recount the history of a picture by Constable, in the possession of Mr. Orrock, whose genuineness, on its exhibition at Burlington House, was questioned and the work denounced as worthless by a member of the Royal Academy. An expression of a private opinion by such an authority would not have mattered; but when that opinion was published in a leading literary and art journal, and was backed by the accredited art-critic, there were presently "wigs on the green." Apart from the fact that the imputation was damaging to Mr. Orrock's position as a connoisseur, it reflected on the discernment and knowledge of the council of selection who, representing the Royal Academy, had chosen the picture for inclusion amongst the Old Masters shown at Burlington House.

In the autumn of 1892, with a view to the impending Exhibition of Old Masters, Mr. Orrock, who had been approached on the subject by Mr. Horsley, R.A., requested that gentleman to favour him with a call. Mr. Orrock intimated that his collection was, as customary with him, at the disposal of the selecting council, and added



John Philip Kemble.



James Orrock

that he should be sorry to have his name as a lender left out of the catalogue, where it had so often appeared before. He was not ambitious to be represented in that character by a number of pictures; one would suffice. In reply, Mr. Horsley named the date of his intended visit, and at the appointed time called. On entering the hall at 48 Bedford Square he paused, with Mr. Orrock, who personally received him, his attention arrested by a work by Constable which was hanging near the door. He expressed his admiration, and examined the picture for some time, saying, "This is worthy of a better place." He then said, "Mr. Orrock, if you have no objection, we should like to have this picture for the exhibition." Mr. Orrock, while consenting, pointed out to Mr. Horsley that it was but an impressionist picture executed chiefly with the palette-knife.

However, the Constable was secured for the exhibition, and Mr. Orrock, in fulfilment of his plans for that season's sketching tour, left town for the Border. While he was quartered at Warkworth, in Northumberland, he read in the *Times* a critical account of the Exhibition of the Old Masters, and found among the pictures mentioned an encomium on "the impressionist Constable." But the *Times'* critic objected to the title which the owner had given to the work, namely, "The Keeper's Cottage," and said that it ought to have been named "Bergholt Mill." In reference to this objection, Mr. F. A. Eaton, secretary of the Royal Academy, stated that "The Keeper's Cottage" was the title which Mr. Orrock had himself supplied. The *Times'* critic was right. The picture had been in Mr. Orrock's possession but a short time before its exhibition at Burlington House, and a label which was upon the back of the canvas had escaped his notice. The paper, which yet remains attached, bears the inscription "Bergholt Mill."

The council did Mr. Orrock the honour to hang the Constable on the line, near the centre, in the First or English Room. Connoisseurs and experts and critics were emphatic in their praise. There was, however, one discordant voice. On the 14th of January

James Orrock

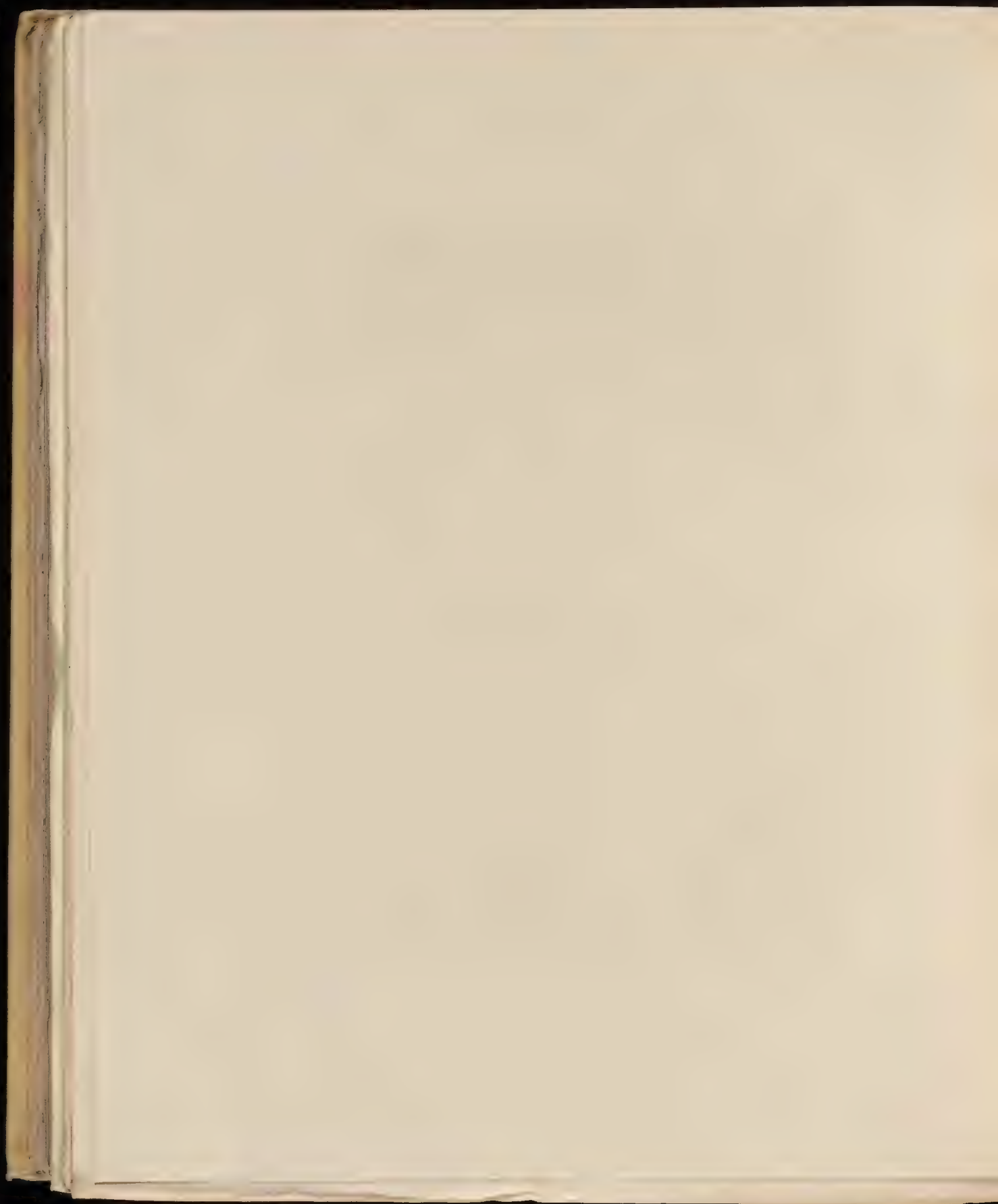
1893, under the regular head of "Fine Art Gossip," appeared in the *Athenæum*.—

"Mr. G. D. Leslie, R.A., writes thus to a friend anent the 'Constables' which just now figure conspicuously at Burlington House:—

"I was at the R.A. on Saturday, and thought you would like to know my opinion as to the two "Constables," Nos. 10 and 134, in the galleries there. I have no hesitation in saying that they are not genuine, and quite unworthy of the places they occupy; indeed, I might use a stronger term with regard to them both. That in Gallery I. is mere palette-scrappings, and the other a bungling imitation. Very early in life I was taught to appreciate the beauty and style of a Constable, and my father pointed out to me over and over again, when I was copying one of this master's pictures, the great characteristic of his occasionally rough execution, namely, that every bright dab of light or dark, though it might, at first sight, seem rough, invariably has *intention*, as well as exquisite emphasis and gradation, sharply contrasting at one part and melting in another. When he has once attained appreciation of this masterly characteristic, it is impossible for the student to take for genuine such senseless and clumsy workmanship as that of these examples. That Constable should ever have treated the architectural details of his much-loved Salisbury Cathedral in the slovenly manner which is manifest in the picture in Gallery III. is simply impossible. Any one doubting this has only to go to the National Gallery and compare the work of Constable which is to be seen there with that in Gallery III. No one knows better than yourself how numerous and impudent are the forgeries of "Constables." It is most significant that it is invariably his rougher style and deft touchings with the palette-knife which are imitated by the scoundrels who follow the audacious trade in question. Picture-buyers are always ready to be imposed upon by those rude scrabbles of the coarser sort, perhaps the coarser the better, which are so rife nowadays. If you can put spokes in the



East Bergholt.



James Orrock

wheels of the forgers' chariots I shall be most delighted, and, in respect to Constable, always ready to help you to the utmost.'

"Need we say that we warmly assent to our accomplished correspondent's opinion? Forged Constables are more common than sham Coxes, easier to produce as 'colourable imitations,' and yet quite as impudent as those which have issued from the manufactories of pseudo-Turners, of which the name is legion."

"My father" was the life-long friend and biographer of Constable. Concerning the identification of the "friend" to whom Mr. Leslie wrote there was so little doubt that naming him would have been gratuitous.

Mr. Orrock's reply to Mr. Leslie's attack, dated January 23rd, 1893, and published in the next ensuing issue of the *Athenæum*, with some unessential omissions, follows:—

"The announcement in your issue of the 14th inst. of the appearance of a new and infallible expert of John Constable's pictures took the art world by surprise. Mr. George D. Leslie, R.A., claims this distinction, and for two reasons: first, because his father knew Constable and wrote his life; secondly, because Mr. George Leslie himself 'very early in life was taught to appreciate the beauty and style of Constable, when he was copying some of that master's pictures.' After this revelation we may reasonably expect that those, all through life, who have copied Constables at the National Gallery and South Kensington Museum will put in claims as rival experts. As for those unfortunates who have lived for years among selected specimens of Constable, and have lovingly studied them, they must be dumb and dead in the presence of the oracles. Mr. Leslie's condescension in explaining to the world of art the 'intention of Constable in his bright dabs of light or dark' is deeply instructive, especially to those landscape painters who may to some extent fancy they are in sympathy with that master's work. Let us hope, however, they may be pardoned if, even after such a training as Mr. Leslie has had 'early in life,' some of them may fail to discover any traces in that artist's own schoolgirl

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pictures of that masculine manner which in Constable he so much 'appreciates'!

"Mr. Leslie has done the owner of 'Salisbury' and myself the honour of enlightening us as to the genuineness of our pictures in Burlington House. He says he 'has no hesitation in saying they are not genuine, and quite unworthy of the places they occupy.' Perhaps even Mr. Leslie, however, although he cannot, of course, see the merits of the pictures themselves, might to an extent be influenced when he is informed that the *history* of both these Constables has been clearly traced!

"Even presuming these Constables are false, is Mr. Leslie, being an Academician, the right man to hold up to ridicule the judgment of his fellow members? What are owners of pictures to conclude when they see genuine works which have been lent to Burlington House damned as spurious, and by one of the Academicians themselves? I fully agree with you in your wish to expose 'all forged Constables, sham Coxes,' &c.; but the 'spokes' which Mr. Leslie urges to be 'put in the wheels of the forgers' chariots' would, one imagines, be better fitted to the chariot wheels of the defamers and denouncers of *genuine* works.

"For Mr. Leslie's information I may state that the picture No. 10, which he says is 'mere palette-knife scrapings,' was purchased by me for its superlative palette-knife *work*, and I fearlessly tell this high-standing expert that it is one of the finest 'impressionist' Constables, both for colour and brilliancy, in existence. No speculative price was paid for it, but, on the contrary, a Constable price; and even after the crushing invective of so high placed a judge, I am still proud of my purchase!

"The pedigrees of both pictures, Nos. 10 and 134, are clearly made out, and Mr. Leslie himself or any one can examine the letters. The 'Salisbury,' No. 134, was unknown to me, but I have seen a written document which proves that it once belonged to Miss Isabel Constable.

"As to my own picture No. 10, I shall prove also that this is

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no forgery. I quote from a letter just received, January 21st, from the late owner, an elderly gentleman of position, and the descendant of several eminent artists who were contemporary with Constable. He says: 'As to the history of the picture by Constable, the subject of which is said to be the mill at East Bergholt, I beg to say that I have known the picture the greater part of my life, it having been in the possession of members of my family during that time, and I am under the impression that formerly it belonged to my great-uncle . . . the well-known miniaturist.' This, at least, can be no *forgery*, for every tyro knows that at Constable's death in 1837, and for long after, his pictures, commercially speaking, were not worth forging, and in his own words he says, 'My art flatters nobody by imitation, it courts nobody by *smoothness*, tickles nobody by petiteness, it is without either fal-de-lal or fiddle-de-dee; how can I then hope to be popular?'

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"P.S.—I, of course, reserve to myself all rights that I may be advised that I have against Mr. George D. Leslie, R.A., for the unjustifiable statements that he has made in his letter to you of the 14th inst., and for the unwarranted attack that he has made upon myself and property."

At the same time Messrs. Buck & Reid, "as agents who acted for the sale from the late to the present owner of the picture by John Constable, R.A., of Salisbury Cathedral," wrote to the *Athenæum* in vindication of the genuineness of that work. "We have a document in our possession," said they, "proving that the picture was purchased as a genuine work of the master of Miss Isabel Constable upwards of twenty years ago. . . . It has been hanging in a mansion in Kent since the time of its purchase of Miss Constable until we sold it to the present owner in 1891."

After some further correspondence Mr. Orrock instructed his solicitor to take action for libel, and Sir Edward Clarke was

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retained. Mr. Orrock thought it due to himself, inasmuch as his established reputation as a connoisseur, an expert, and "a Constable man" was at stake, to thoroughly thresh out the question before a legal tribunal. Mediators interposed. Mr. Orrock's friend, Mr. G. A. Storey, A.R.A., waited on him and entreated him to reconsider his determination to take legal proceedings. Mr. Orrock at first refused. He had been attacked, and was acting purely in self-defence. For some time Mr. Orrock persisted in his refusal. However, a second intermediary, an old and esteemed friend, who was also intimate with Mr. Leslie, waited upon the recalcitrant plaintiff and pressed upon him to withdraw. Yielding at last to the plea of the second appellant, Mr. Orrock, as he says, "threw up the sponge." Neither Mr. Leslie's apology nor Mr. Orrock's acceptance of it, both of which were published in the *Athenæum*, need be quoted at any length. Mr. Leslie expressed his sincere regrets for having given Mr. Orrock so much annoyance in the matter, having no personal animus against him. "I am ready to admit," he said, "that no doubt a difference of opinion does exist about the picture, and I am free to confess that when I wrote my letter I had not perhaps sufficiently weighed the fact that the picture had been accepted by the members of the Academy who formed the committee of the Exhibition, and was, therefore, entitled to more respect than I gave it." Mr. Orrock said that "it could not be expected that Mr. Leslie would alter his opinion," and added that he had received "a number of letters from the best of the acknowledged experts as to the genuineness" of Mr. Raphael's picture and his own—No. 134, the "Salisbury."

And now for the history of this remarkable picture. It was the property, and had been in the uninterrupted possession of a member of the Engleheart family for nearly seventy years.

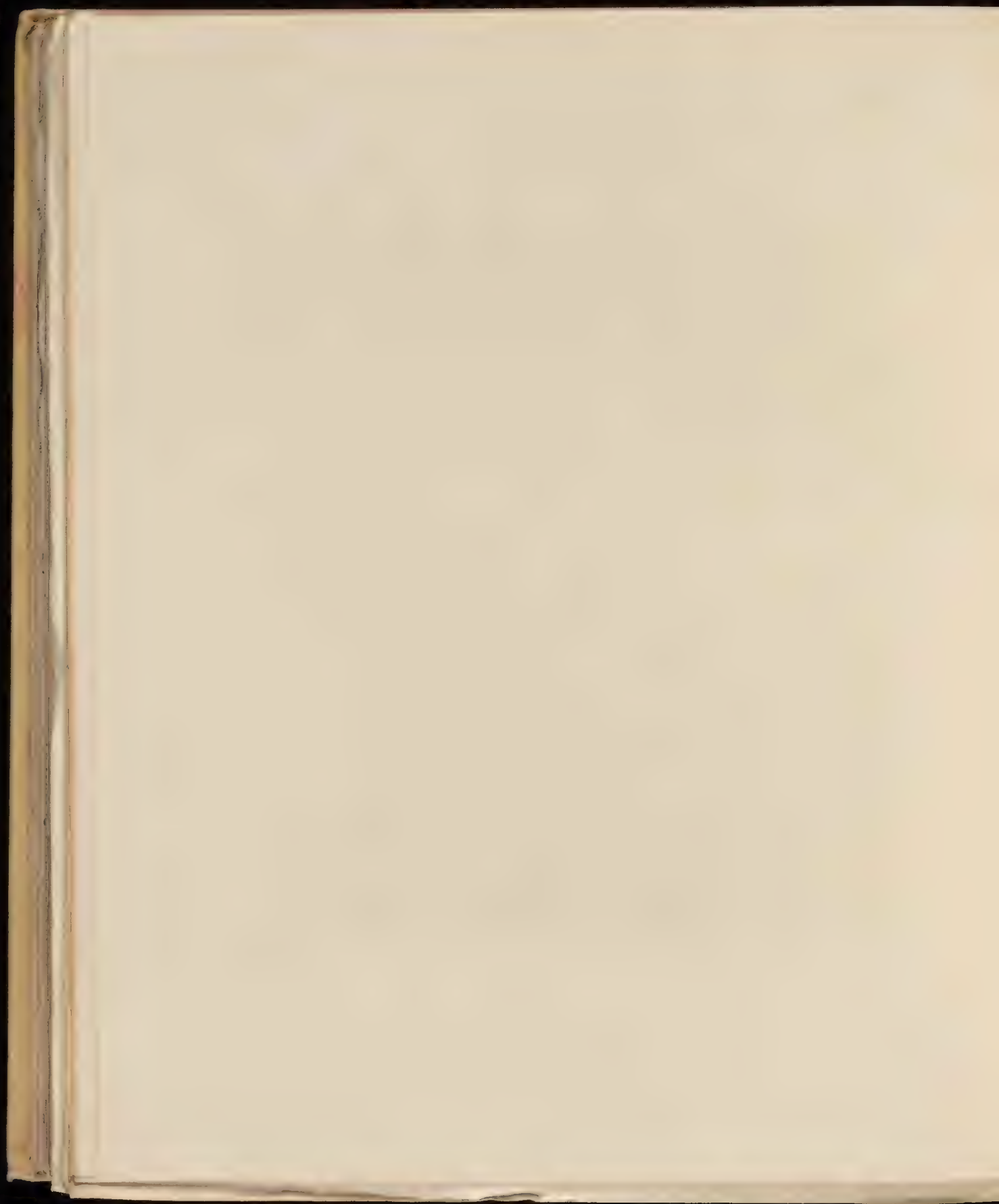
"Though Shakespeare asks us 'What's in a name?'
(As if cognomens were much the same),
There's really a very great scope in it."



Water wheel at a

Lidham e Mill.

1850. January 10. A. 1850.



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In the case of the name of the owner of the picture in question "very great scope" indeed, and weight, and significance. Even if the work had been bought blindly "on pedigree" only, the purchaser would have had an uncommonly strong guarantee of its genuineness. It formed part of a collection made by a member of the family in question, who were a group of artists. Francis Engleheart, who died in 1849, was the engraver of Wilkie's "Duncan Gray" and "The Only Daughter," and of works by Smirke, Hilton, and other English masters. There was another member of the same family, Timothy Stansfeld Engleheart, who died in 1879, who was also an engraver. George Engleheart, who died in 1839, was a miniature painter. He exhibited at the Royal Academy original portraits and copies from Reynolds. His nephew, J. C. D. Engleheart (1783-1862), also practised as a miniature painter. To complete this brief reference, passing allusion may be made to Thomas Engleheart, the sculptor, who as a student at the Royal Academy took the gold medal and defeated Flaxman, who was in the competition.

Pausing at this point, without in the least seeking to labour it, let us submit to the sceptics of the genuineness of the picture what they and their adherents are called upon to believe. First, that, at a remote period, before there was any vogue for Constable's works, it *paid* forgers to counterfeit the rough studies of the master, and, secondly, that an artist, who knew a picture when he saw it, and whose eyes were as open to such a fraud as then prevailed in the trade of picture-dealing as any observer who has lived since, acquired for his own personal enjoyment a forged Constable. In the manufacture, separate from the art, of the work itself, we find curiously convincing evidence of the frugal hand of the master. The original canvas was undoubtedly an upright, but the painter, having altered his mind as to the plan of the design, converted the upright into a square canvas. This he did easily enough, as is shown by the two large flaps overlapping the stretcher which

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he utilised for the purpose. The marks of the old upright stretcher can be plainly seen on the picture.

Let us here, in another than the military sense, "mark time." Constable died in 1837. Mr. Robert C. Leslie, the editor of the new edition of the *Life of John Constable*¹ (who was born in 1826, and was therefore eleven years of age when the great master passed away), writes: "As the schoolfellow and neighbour of his sons, Alfred and Lionel, I spent many happy hours among Constable's finest pictures, until I believe I became more intimate with them and his sketches than I was with my own father's work. And while able to speak with some authority upon Constable's work in his best period, I can also do so upon his use of the palette-knife, because some time after the sale of those few of his pictures at Foster's not bought in for his family, two sketches upon six-foot canvases of the 'Hay Wain' and 'Leaping Horse' were, for want of room elsewhere, stored at my father's house. Though wonderfully fine in sparkle and effect, both were more or less mere masses of colour, loaded on with brush and knife, and in spite of a goodly assemblage of *dealers* and others at the sale, no bid above £5 was made for them." Mr. Robert C. Leslie's authority as a critic of Constable's work and ways is not in question. He has set it forth, with its source and foundation, and there is an end of the matter. But, as to the question of time, if a couple of six-foot canvases failed to fetch £5 at or about the period when the picture condemned by Mr. Leslie's brother passed into the possession of Engleheart "the miniaturist," forging such "Constables" must have been a miserably ill-paid pursuit. Mr. Robert C. Leslie says that "Constable, no doubt, in certain of his later works, employed the palette-knife freely, but it was never used until he had secured the drawing, tone, and effect of the picture with the brush."

In relation to the exposition of the painter's intentions in the impressionist study, Mr. Orrock says: "Constable wished to make a

¹ Chapman & Hall, Ltd., 1896.

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brilliant and luminous oil-sketch, so as to be a standard and guide for him in some work he had in contemplation, but not necessarily of a similar subject. Of all men, he knew that a powerful first-intention impasto sketch would always be beyond any finished picture, especially if painted with myriads of broken colours with the palette-knife. Those who looked for smooth and ivory-like treatment could not in the least value the work of the great English master. One of the first etchers in the British school—and a painter—craved permission to reproduce this work, on his own independent appreciation of it, because the deep and velvety chiaroscuro, which Constable went for, and which was so strikingly expressed in the sketch, 'would be,' as he said, 'a grand lesson for him.'

Mr. G. D. Leslie, R.A., who was two years of age when Constable died, and four years old when the sale of the pictures and sketches which remained in Constable's possession at the time of his death took place, said in his letter in the *Athenæum*: "Very early in life I was taught to appreciate the beauty and style of a Constable, and my father pointed out to me over and over again, when I was copying one of this master's pictures, the great characteristic of his occasionally rough execution, namely, that every bright dab of light or dark, though it might at first sight seem rough, invariably has *intention*." So much the father might be able to show, whether he used the term "dabs of colour" or not, and if he at the same time charged his observations with the admonition he has left on record and in print, namely, that "it requires a close and long acquaintance with Art to penetrate through the disguise of exaggeration to natural principles, and also, in some cases, an acquaintance with what may be called the handwriting of great painters, fully to decipher their meaning," the lesson was useful indeed. But much as we may admire the loyal devotion of the elder Leslie to Constable, and his earnest sympathy with the landscape painter's work, we, accepting his own frank confessions in the spirit in which they are offered, are impelled to conclude that, essentially, Constable was beyond him. There were heights and depths in the

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landscape painter's achievement which the figure painter failed to fathom. Leslie was not, in the truest sense, a colourist.¹

After its exhibition at Burlington House the picture was shown at the New Gallery, and reproduced in the *Art Journal* as one of the illustrations in the essay on Constable that is repeated in the present chapter. It was exhibited for the third time (in 1897) by request at Munich. In thanking Mr. Orrock for the loan the English agent wrote: "The Central Committee of the above exhibition beg me to express to you their sincerest gratitude for your great kindness in lending this masterful landscape by Constable for that exhibition. Permit me to join in this feeling of thanks, and let me assure you that the picture was placed in the centre of the room and has met with the highest appreciation by artists, press, and public." In a subsequent letter to Mr. Orrock the writer referred to the "most appreciative notices which he had seen in the German papers." When M. Henri Rochefort, a connoisseur and art-critic whose authority in the arts few intelligent Frenchmen would question, visited Mr. Orrock in company with Mr. Tom Permain, one of the pictures which aroused his animated admiration was the "palette-knife impressionist" Constable. A parade of authorities in the English school of landscape painting, who were ready to testify to their conviction of the genuineness of the Constable in question, had they been called, would be neither fair nor handsome now that the dispute has been "quietly inurned." Mr. Orrock, for all that, cherishes amongst the letters which he received from members of the Royal Academy one written by the chief of painters in his field of landscape, who laughs the sceptics to good-humoured scorn.

¹ "His" (Leslie's) "taste," says Tom Taylor, "was long in forming." In one of his letters he writes: "I am extremely obliged by your candid and, as I feel them to be, very just remarks on my defects in colour, chiaroscuro, &c., which, be assured, I shall spare no pains to correct as much as possible, though in these important points I have little hope of ever excelling, least of all in colour, for which I am afraid I have not a good natural eye." Writing to Constable, he says: "You entirely composed the light and shadow for me." Leslie, his biographer states, left us few examples of effective landscape paintings. He says himself: "Of landscape, which I had never studied, I really knew nothing, or worse than nothing, for I admired as poetical that which I now see to be mannered, conventional, or extravagant. But the more I knew of Constable, the more I regretted that I had not known him at the commencement of my studies." Leslie put the mountain ash with the red berries into the Autolycus landscape on Constable's advice.

CHAPTER XXIV

Mr. Orrock's gifts of works of art to English and Scottish galleries—Leicester—Edinburgh unable to accept masterpieces in the English water-colour art for exhibition in the permanent gallery—Account of the transference by Mr. Orrock to Glasgow at Glasgow's request—The Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts—Mr. Orrock's gifts to the South Kensington Museum—Pictures and drawings—Blue China—Mr. Orrock's beginnings with "Blue"—Sir Henry Thompson—The Orrock collection at South Kensington—Mr. Murray Marks—Rossetti—Mr. Whistler—A precious Hawthorn pot—Sir Henry Thompson's collection—Charles Augustus Howell—A dealer who "knew Mr. Orrock"—The story of a smash and a restoration—English furniture—A fallacy exposed—Mr. Orrock's views—Famous designers for the craftsmen—Our incomparable English furniture.

MR. ORROCK'S gifts of works of art to the galleries and academies of England and Scotland, valuable, important, and in noteworthy instances educational, have been bestowed here and there, as the inducement arose, ever since the year 1884. His contributions to loan exhibitions all over the country of choice examples of the masters chosen from his own famous collection have made the name of Orrock a household word wherever such exhibitions took place. There is naturally a warm corner in his heart for the town and people of Leicester, with whom he was so long and so pleasantly associated. It was made known to him "across the walnuts and the wine," about the period previously named, that a work of his own to be placed in the Leicester Art Gallery would be most acceptable. To ask, even in that indirect way, was to have. Mr. Orrock felt it an honour to be represented by a picture of his own painting permanently in the dear old town, and accordingly he gave what was uniformly considered the best oil picture he had already accomplished, namely "Hovering-ham Ferry," a view of one of the most picturesque reaches of the river Trent, painted out of doors. De Wint had found congenial subjects on the same sketching ground. At the same time Mr. Orrock gave to Leicester, for the use and benefit of the students of

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the Art Academy, several early drawings by the masters of the English Water School.

With regard to another and more remarkable donation, Mr. Orrock says: "I felt that the Scottish artists had, with few exceptions, not done themselves justice by painting in water-colour as well as in oil, and that England, chiefly in consequence of the influence of fine collections of water-colours which were distributed over the country, had Caledonia at a disadvantage. Moreover, with the establishment of two water-colour societies in London, the 'Royal Water-Colour' and the 'Royal Institute,' English artists enjoyed opportunities that had been denied the Scottish brotherhood. My wish was to present to my native city of Edinburgh a particularly choice collection of examples of the best English masters in the hitherto neglected and, so far as Scotland was concerned, comparatively unknown and unpractised medium. As to the selection of Edinburgh, my motive was twofold. First, because it was my birthplace, and, secondly, in consequence of its having been for many years the seat of the Royal Scottish Academy. I conferred with my old friend Dr. Marshall (Rector of the High School of Edinburgh) on the subject, and he advised me to call on Sir Fettes Douglas, the President of the R.S.A., submit my proposal, and place it implicitly in his hands for consideration by the body. Sir Fettes Douglas received me with much cordiality, and proposed that I should meet him and the council of the R.S.A. concerning my proposal. We met, and my gift was gratefully accepted. The drawings comprised 'A Coast Scene,' and 'London from Surrey Woods,' by George Barret; 'In a Venetian Balcony,' by R. P. Bonington; 'The Refectory of the Monastery,' by George Cattermole; 'A Welsh Stream,' 'The Mill Sluice,' 'The Watering-Trough,' and 'A Moorland Scene,' by David Cox; 'Haymakers,' 'A Lincolnshire Landscape,' 'Landscape with Pond and Sluice,' and 'Hilly Landscape,' by Peter de Wint; 'An Interior' (with figure), by William Hunt; 'A Mountain Landscape,' and 'A Welsh Village,' by John Varley.

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"I made it a condition of my gift that the drawings should be permanently exhibited in the Scottish Academy or National Gallery of Scotland. They gave me a luncheon and expressed their thanks for the gift. And there the matter was left.

"About a year after the completion of the arrangement, during which period I, residing in London, had heard nothing further, a letter appeared in the *Scotsman* from a correspondent quite unknown to myself, complaining that the drawings which I had presented to the city of Edinburgh had not yet been exhibited. It was there-upon ascertained that the Royal Scottish Academy had no power to exhibit those drawings, or, in fact, any other pictures, in the Scottish National Gallery, although, strangely enough, a number of diploma works by members are comprised in the beautiful little collection which they possess. I was informed that, on investigating the matter, the authorities in control of the permanent gallery had resolved, owing to the lack of the necessary space, not to exhibit any more pictures belonging to the Royal Scottish Academy. The misfortune to my mind seemed that, owing to the R.S.A. being subservient to a Chamber of Commerce, there was no prospect whatever of those beautiful drawings being exhibited, and consequently of my dearest wishes being carried into effect.

"On the rumour getting abroad, Mr. James T. Tullis, a prominent citizen of Glasgow, and a friend of my own, wrote to me on the subject, and to him I expressed the disappointment I felt in my inability to benefit my native city, and the cause of Scottish art, as I had desired. In his cordial rejoinder Mr. Tullis reminded me that I was a Scotsman, and that Glasgow was one of the capitals of Scotland. Further, that I had been associated in my very early days, while at school at Irvine, with Ayrshire and with 'Glasgie bodies.' Could I not, therefore, be induced to transfer my gift to Glasgow? I instantly agreed, and Glasgow had the drawings."

Mr. Orrock would be the very last to deny that Glasgow deserved them. The Corporation Galleries of Art, which, to quote the preface to the catalogue, "owe their origin to Mr. Archibald M'Lellan,

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formerly a Town Councillor and Magistrate of the City," must, inevitably, as time goes on, rank with the noblest institutions of the kind in Great Britain. The M'Lellan Gallery formed the foundation of the collection. "During his lifetime," says the writer of the preface aforesaid, in whom one discerns an appellant as well as chronicler, "Mr. William Ewing made a gift of thirty-six pictures, and that donation was subsequently supplemented by a bequest of his entire collection. In 1877, Mrs. Graham-Gilbert bequeathed to the city the rich and valuable cabinet of pictures formed by her deceased husband, the eminent artist, John Graham-Gilbert, R.S.A. In January 1896, the five sons of the late James Reid of Auchterarder, and of Hyde Park Locomotive Works, Glasgow, addressed a letter to the Lord Provost, stating that, in affectionate and grateful remembrance of their father, who, at the time of his death, was Lord Dean of Guild for the city, and President of the Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts, they offered to present to the city ten of the most valuable pictures from their father's art collection formed by him in his town residence." These comprised examples of Turner, Constable, John Linnell, Corot, Israels, Alma Tadema, Orchardson, Patrick Nasmyth, Charles Jacque, and Troyon. An important bequest of pictures had been received under the Deed of Settlement of the late Mr. Adam Teacher, while the seventh edition of the catalogue (1898) was in type.

Writing to Mr. Orrock in making "respectful application for a gift of the drawings," the Lord Provost (James Bell, Esq.) said, "While the present gallery is not unsuitable for the display of pictures, in the new range of buildings in Kelvingrove Park about to be undertaken, there will be provided a very fine and spacious series of saloons for both old and modern pictures." The Lord Provost's letter was dated December 1892. In a communication made to Mr. Orrock by Mr. Robert Walker, acting secretary of the Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts, last year, the writer said, "The water-colours of the English masters presented by you to Glasgow are, and have been since the presentation, in the Corpora-

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tion Picture Galleries, Sauchiehall Street. They are placed on special screens and are well shown. Of course, when the new Corporation Art Gallery in the West End Park shall have been completed, which will not be for some time yet, they will be transferred there with the rest of the permanent Corporation collection." With this letter Mr. Orrock received from Mr. James Paton, the excellent superintendent of the Corporation Museum, a copy of the catalogue, from the preface to which the foregoing extracts were made. It will scarcely be doubted that Mr. Orrock opened a new chapter in the history of British Water-Colour Art when he caused those fifteen masterpieces to be placed in the Glasgow galleries. They were actually the first of their kind to find permanent exhibition across the Border. That they will not be the last is the conviction of the giver. He is happy in having sown the good seed, but happier still in confident expectation of the harvest. With regard to Mr. Orrock's additions to the pictures in the South Kensington Museum (which will probably have been augmented before these sheets are through the press), he says: "My friend Dr. Marshall was paying me one of his welcome visits in London when I showed him an unusually large oil picture by George Barret the younger, the celebrated water-colourist. I observed that such a magnificent work as that ought rightly to belong to the nation, and I thought that, one day, I would present it to South Kensington Museum. He exclaimed in his racy Scottish way, 'Man, why not do it now?' On brief consideration, I followed his advice. Having always felt a deep interest in the history of the two celebrated De Wints in oil, which, in consequence of their having been executed by a water-colour painter, for a long time found no worthy resting-place—although they were offered to the National Gallery—until they were finally located at South Kensington, I felt that this grand Barret in oil, also painted by a master in my beloved art, ought by right to keep them company. I therefore made it a condition of my gift, one that every artist will thoroughly appreciate, that the Barret should be hung alongside the two De Wints. The gift was accepted on these terms, and the

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three pictures are grouped nobly together to this day in what may fairly be called a truly English section of our National Gallery. To see them, and them only, will repay a pilgrimage to South Kensington on the part of any one who would dwell delightedly on what two masters in water-colour can accomplish in oil. The 'early' Henry Dawson which I presented to the South Kensington Museum is one of the most beautiful of his works. A pastoral poem of a picture! It would arrest intellectual attention anywhere, and, that secured, enchain the study of the critic and connoisseur, as a typical work by a true master in the English school. Giving begot giving, imbued as I was with the feeling that certain masters *ought* to be worthily represented in the National Galleries. I was the fortunate possessor of a magnificent De Loutherbourg, and, as there was no picture to my knowledge, and certainly none of any importance, by that painter, in the National Collection—I bestowed a work which, tradition avows, Turner himself admired, in its proper place at the South Kensington Museum. There were also some water-colour drawings comprised in the donation, more particularly some beautiful specimens of Hills, the animal painter in water-colour."

Mr. Orrock made another considerable addition to the galleries of the Museum at South Kensington, in April 1900. Under the head of "Water-Colours at the Victoria and Albert Museum," the *Magazine of Art* for June of that year said: "Through the generosity of Mr. James Orrock, R.I., a valuable addition has been made to the collection of English water-colour drawings in the galleries at South Kensington. Nowhere else can the development of this delightful phase of our national art be studied as in this collection; and Mr. Orrock's gift brings its history down to the present day, the drawings presented by him including examples by some of the recognised leading exponents of water-colour art now living or recently deceased. The total number of drawings in the gift is twenty-three." In his remarks on the donation the writer deals with certain of the drawings which furnish the illustrations of the

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article. "'At the Nore,' by George Chambers, is a characteristic drawing by this comparatively little known artist." "The work of William Müller was already represented at South Kensington, but the sketch of 'Venice, 1834,' is a welcome addition to our national collection. The sporting scenes depicted by Frederick Tayler—President of the Old Water-Colour Society from 1858 to 1871—are well known to all students of English water-colour art, and the drawing of 'Weighing the Deer' is a characteristic example of his handling and style. The work of George Haydock Dodgson is very little known, for between 1817 and 1850 he exhibited but nine examples—all at the Royal Academy. Three of his drawings—'The Bite,' 'Richmond Castle, Yorks,' and 'Crossing the Brook'—are included in Mr. Orrock's gift. The delightful drawings of the late H. G. Hine, for many years Vice-President of the Royal Institute, are familiar to most people. Two good specimens are 'Bible Bottom, near Lewes'—a view of the Sussex downs which the artist so loved to paint—and 'Agglestone, near Swanage,' painted in 1870, a fine sunset effect. The graceful work of the late Charles Green, R.I., is represented in three character sketches, 'The Bar Parlour,' 'The Street Seller,' and 'Gutter Children.' Another member of the Institute whose work attracted great attention during his lifetime was the late Tom Collier. The collection includes three charming drawings from his hand, 'A Seascape,' 'Lyminster Church, near Arundel,' and 'Hills near Loch Awe: Twilight.' Mr. Bernard Evans, R.I., is among the leading living landscape painters in water-colour, and two drawings by him—'Cannes and the Cannet,' and 'Grasse from Croix des Gardes'—worthily illustrate the charm and delicacy of his work. Mr. John Fulleylove, too, has acquired wide reputation for architectural and landscape drawings, and the two drawings given by Mr. Orrock are typical of his art. They are 'Ruins of the Roman Theatre at Arles: Columns of the Proscenium,' and 'San Gimignano, near Siena.' Of Mr. Orrock's own work there are three examples—'Dunottar Castle, Kincardineshire,' 'St. Andrews, Fifeshire,' and

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'On the Nith, Dumfries.' Sir James D. Linton is represented by three single-figure drawings, 'Wallflowers,' painted in 1887; 'Priscilla,' painted in 1883; and 'The Mandolin.' In addition to these water-colours Mr. Orrock has also presented four oil paintings: 'The Wayfarers,' by Mr. Tom Graham; 'The Thames: Evening,' by Mr. John R. Reid; and two small works by Mr. John Fulleylove, R.I."

Under the head of "A Present to the Nation," the *Echo*, in this case justifying its name so far as the metropolitan and provincial press was concerned, said: "Mr. James Orrock, R.I., is a fortunate man. He is himself a painter in water-colours of very considerable skill, the possessor of a collection of pictures in this beautiful and most characteristically British method, which is probably in many respects unrivalled, and he is also just now to be the recipient of the thanks of all those sincerely interested in art for the generous and carefully-considered gift he has made to the national collection of paintings at the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington. These collections, if they do not attract so large a public in search of mere amusement as do those in the other national galleries, yet serve a purpose, perhaps, more useful. They are, before all things, historical. No other gallery possesses so complete a series of examples—especially of water-colours—chosen firstly from this point of view, but at the same time with a keen eye to artistic merit. And in his selection of the items of his gift Mr. Orrock has kept this in sight, and, instead of presenting a haphazard collection of paintings of no special importance in relation to those already possessed by the Museum, he carefully purchased, for the purpose, works which are valuable as filling gaps, as well as for their own sakes. . . . The importance of this gift lies not so much in its intrinsic value as in the example it sets to other collectors or wealthy persons to assist in the study of art by careful selection instead of indiscriminate patronage."

In the present chapter, and while we, as it were, are at South Kensington, appropriate reference may be made to the Orrock

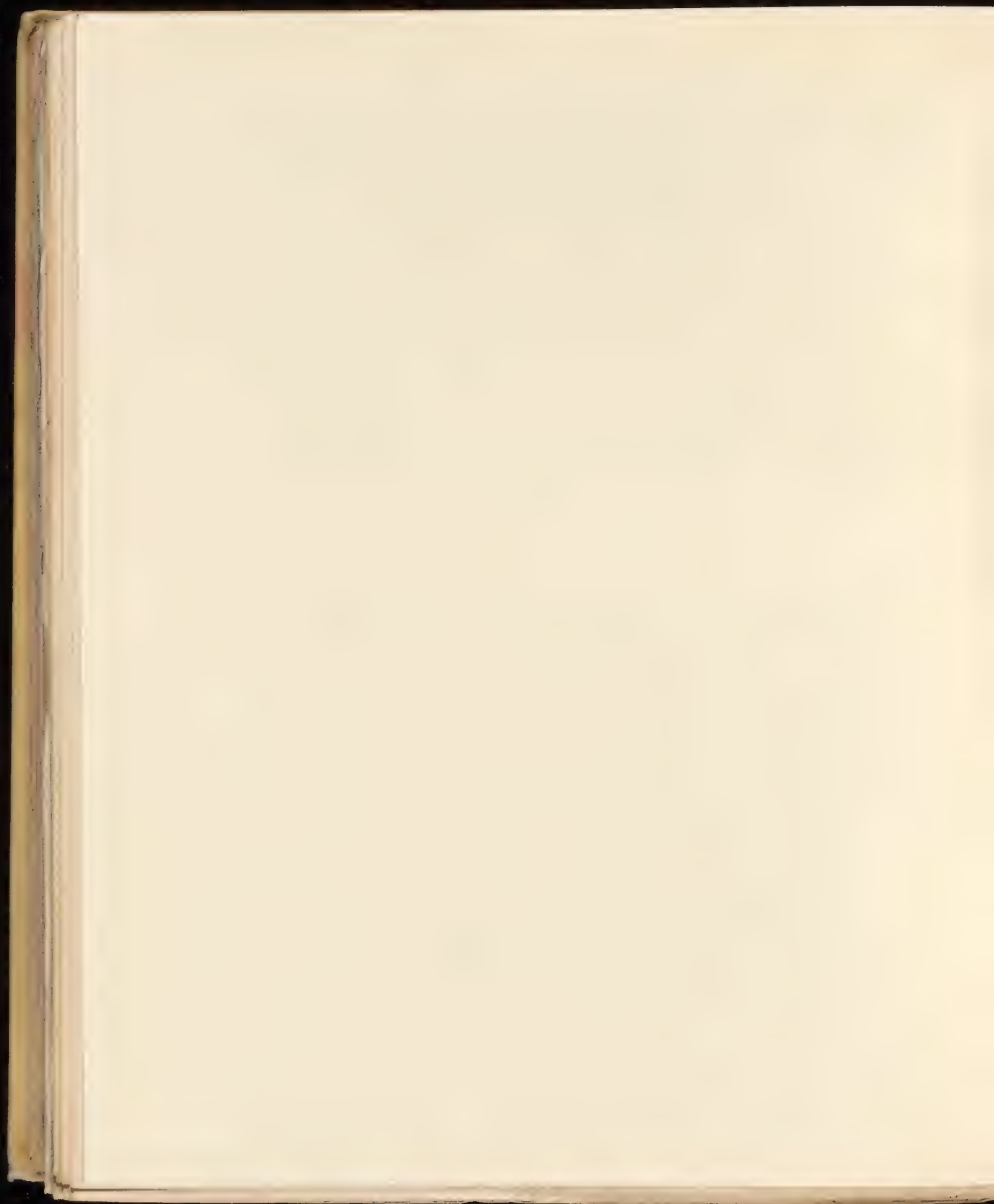


OLD CHINESE PORCELAIN

From the Summer Palace, Peking



GARNITURE OF OLD NANKIN FAN PATTERN BLUE



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collection of Blue China which is encased there, and *inter alia* to its history. The passion for acquiring specimens of the most exquisite ceramic manufacture in the world, for it is nothing less than a passion with enthusiasts who have the right perception of its beauty, and, for that matter, with the votaries of fashion who "collect" it to be in the vogue, has never amounted to a craze like the tulip mania; but it ranks with the most strenuous of competitive struggles for possession on the part of the plutocracy of the Art market, and it is not likely to suffer much abatement. The decorative beauty of Blue China (to employ the conveniently generic term) is beyond compare. Form and colour and pictorial design accord with the appointments of a room or hall exemplifying English Art in a manner that no other order of ceramics could provide. With such a room so furnished and embellished, and with carpets from the old looms of Persia to complete the scheme of colour, nothing else is required to make the picture "fortunate." There is consequently the soundest reason at the basis of the passion for Blue China, whether some of the more avid of the collectors know it or not. Fine examples of the precious ware are in every sense an artistic possession. And the pottery has a romantic history which distinctly enhances its interest. We rise from a perusal of the China chapters in "Chaffers"¹ with increased amazement at the not yet fully known achievements of the teeming world of Cathay.

Set down as they might be in the pages of a guide-book, the facts of the history of the craft are striking enough. One is tempted, by way of a presumably apt digression, to mention a few. Porcelain was first invented under the Han dynasty, between 185 and 90 B.C., or 1600 years before it was known to the Western nations of the globe. At the end of the eighteenth century an un-walled city called King-te-chin, with 3000 furnaces for the baking of porcelain, had become famous within the Chinese Empire, and

¹ "Marks and Monograms on European and Oriental Pottery and Porcelain." Revised and edited by Frederick Litchfield. Eighth edition. Reeves & Turner.

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partially known to the outer world. King-te-chin is now a heap of ruins. It was sacked and pillaged by the rebels (Taepings), who destroyed all the kilns and workshops, giving a fatal and irrecoverable blow to the industry. Ysbranti Ides, Ambassador to China from Peter the Great in 1692, states that the finest, richest, and most valuable china is not exported, or at least very rarely, particularly a yellow ware, which is destined for the Imperial use, and is prohibited to all other persons. They have a kind of crimson ware,¹ which is very fine and dear, because great quantities of it are spoiled in the baking. "The Chinese pheasant, the Imperial tiger, the Celestial dragon, which on pieces destined for the Emperor's use specially is represented with five claws; for princes four; and for commerce with three only; but with all these incongruities they (the Chinese artificers) possess the knowledge of producing many brilliant colours and glazes of peculiar tones, which our most skilful chemists have hitherto been unable to imitate successfully." And the mystery which envelops the production of crackle has never been penetrated. The most ancient as well as the most esteemed vases, &c., in China are the blue *camaieu*, painted under the glaze, consequently not to be deteriorated by the action of the elements, being in fact indestructible in that respect. The flora and fauna of China, its warrior life and peaceful pursuits, its myths and legends, its history, its poetry, and its grotesquerie are employed in embellishing this beautiful fabric. The artist who decorated the vase or bottle often added a pretty or admonitory sentiment to the design. One of the motto-marks on blue porcelain (954) is: "When the rain has ceased, the sky becomes clear." So Charles Mackay, and other minor bards, did not discover, for poetical purposes, that "sunshine follows rain"! The Chinese painter's delineations of the lotus, the chrysanthemum, the sesame flower, the tea-tree, the leaves of the bamboo, the peony, and the ever-lovely hawthorn bloom are the delight of the botanist, and their disposition in decorative

¹ Sang-de-bœuf.



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B

A

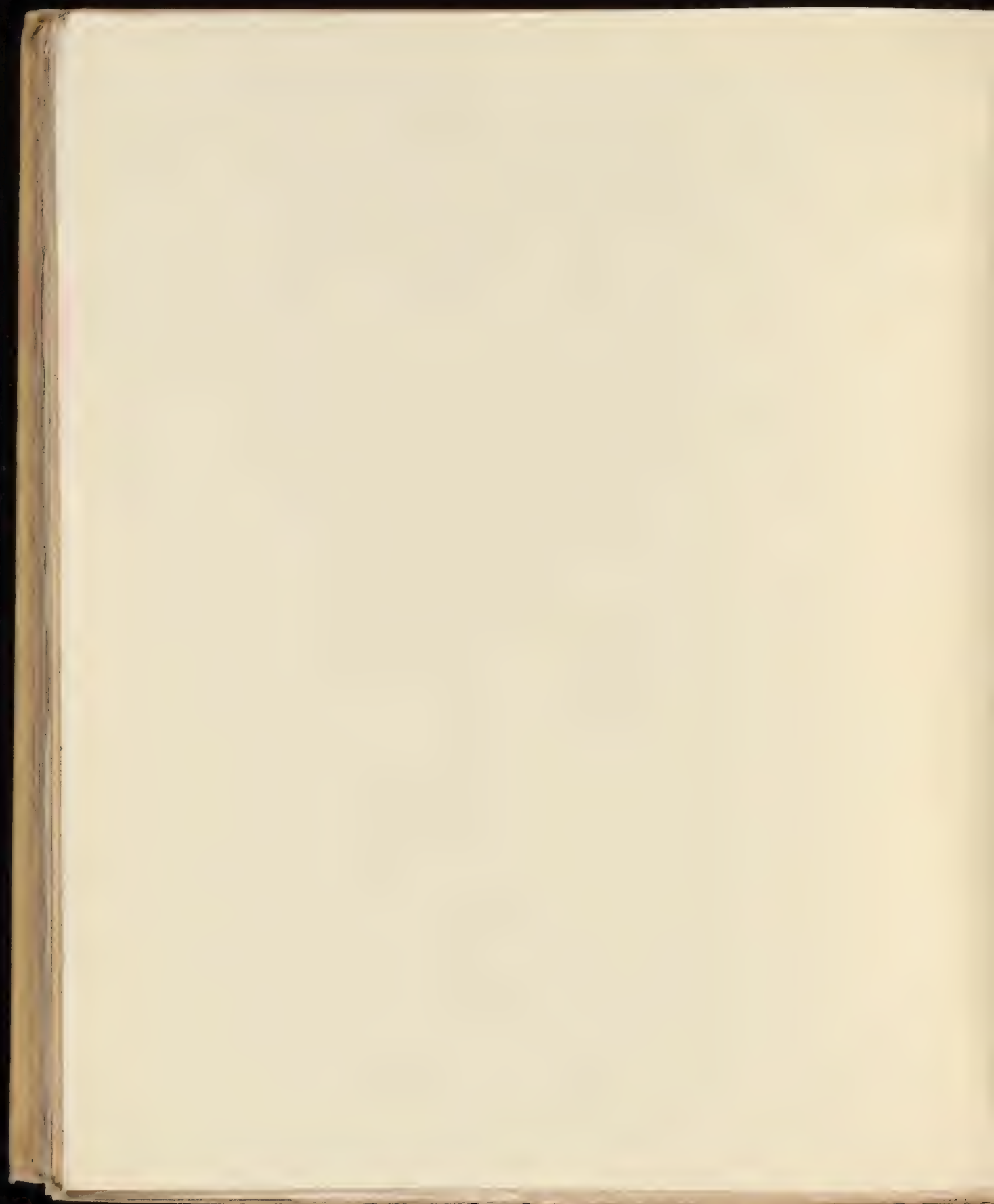
B

B

A. NANKIN POWDER BLUE BOTTLE
B. NANKIN BLUE AND WHITE BOTTLES



SET OF OLD CHINESE POWDER BLUE VASES



James Orrock

embellishment an education in that order of Art. The colouring of the finest "Blue" beggars description. Perhaps Mr. Ruskin by the comparative method put it most graphically into words when he exclaimed, on first beholding a matchless piece of hawthorn in Mr. Orrock's cluster of gems, "It is a living sapphire!"¹

"I had, on my own judgment and appreciation, acquired a number of pieces," says Mr. Orrock, "but I was indebted for what I may describe as my first revelation of the manifold splendour of Blue China to Sir Henry Thompson, himself a well-known collector. He was then (more than a quarter of a century ago) President of the Artists' and Amateurs' Society, at that period a deservedly popular institution. I was deeply interested in the various choice specimens which Sir Henry presented to my notice, and with his description of their curious and distinctive qualities, and I ventured to ask him, with the ardour of a determined collector, if he could inform me where such fine pieces were to be obtained. He gave me the address of Mr. Murray Marks, upon whom I immediately called, and informed him at whose distinguished instance I had come. I told him that I was desirous of possessing some fine specimens of Old Blue Nankin China, and begged that he would assist me in my endeavour. I found Mr. Marks most courteous and obliging, and a thorough master of his subject. He showed me a number of perfect pieces, and at the same time minutely described their peculiarities. The foundation of my collection was laid with him. I went on adding to it, and in due time it became of superior importance. When it was noised abroad that my gathering of the Blue consisted of a large number of the rarest specimens of this unique ceramic art, I was repeatedly entreated to lend cabinets of them to exhibitions. In consequence of the risk attending the carriage of such fragile articles I courteously but firmly refused.

"At length, however, I was—I confess reluctantly—induced to

¹ "The blue colour is everlastingly appointed by the Deity to be a source of delight."—*Ruskin*.

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make an exception in favour of the South Kensington Museum. I consented to fill several cases with pieces taken from my collection, but stipulated that they were to be returned 'safe and sound' at the end of six months. I was, however, pressed to extend the period, and I consented. During the first Jubilee year I was requested by the Executive of the Edinburgh Jubilee Exhibition to transfer the Kensington Loan to Edinburgh. Feeling disposed to comply with this request, I called at the South Kensington Museum, and Colonel (now General Sir John F.) Donnelly and Mr. Armstrong very kindly said they would lend the vans for the purpose of conveying the china to Edinburgh. But to my surprise they added, after extolling the Blue, in common, as they declared, with the best experts and connoisseurs who had examined it, that they were anxious to purchase the collection as it stood for permanent preservation in the Museum. I replied that I regarded the offer as a great honour, and that although I had not had the slightest idea of parting with the china, I would give the matter due consideration. The exhibit, although exceedingly choice, formed but a comparatively small portion of my collection. Finally I consented. The price I declined to name. They were to submit the pieces to the valuation of the best experts, and I would then say whether the sum named was satisfactory. I may add that I asked Colonel Donnelly and Mr. Armstrong whether they would allow me to reserve the celebrated Hawthorn jar which had belonged to Howell, the virtuoso, and two other pieces of extreme rarity. They replied—and I confess I think they were in the right—that they could not agree to the deviation, and playfully added, 'Mr. Orrock, you are sometimes called the Admiral of the Blue.' I replied 'Yes; but I should now consider myself Emperor of China.' To the observation that I must have a factory for those pots, I had so many, I said, 'To be sure I had; behind my house, 48 Bedford Square.' The valuation was made, by—as I understood, but never actually knew—three of the best experts in London, and I, after mature reflection, accepted the sum named in their appraisal. That is the brief history of

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the Orrock Collection of Nankin Blue that is permanently housed at the South Kensington Museum."

On the fascinating subject of Blue China few experts or connoisseurs are able to descant with profounder knowledge or greater charm than Mr. Murray Marks, of the firm of Durlacher Brothers, Bond Street. As an authority, an expert and connoisseur, particularly in fourteenth and fifteenth century works of art, and in bronzes as well as in ceramics, Mr. Marks holds a distinguished place, and his fame is European. Mr. Marks's grandfather, Emanuel Marks Van Galen, a native of Holland and a burgher of Amsterdam, was a dealer in works of Fine Art. Mr. Baldock, who was buyer for the Prince Regent, and who knew the old merchant, advised him to send his son, the father of Mr. Murray Marks, to England. Mr. Baldock, by-the-bye, was grandfather of the present Lady Kilmorey. He was the great dealer of the century, and was known in every capital in Europe. About the time that Mr. Marks's father became a London citizen, when he dropped Van Galen from the patronymic and became simply Marks, vast quantities of Blue China were imported into Holland, and thence into this country. A great deal of it was sent to Constantinople, but a large portion was sold by the Dutch merchants to a man named Unsworth, who redecorated it with red, green, and gold, covering the white portion and leaving the blue. He plastered on mineral colours, re-fired, and in every possible way ruined it. One feels melancholy at the idea of this wretch's vulgar abominations.

However, to come at a leap from the dark and disastrous day of the atrocious Unsworth to a period within the delightful recollection of Mr. Murray Marks, when unsophisticated "Blue" re-appeared in the market "unmixed with baser matter," we find Dante Gabriel Rossetti one of the earliest pioneers of the new era. In the year 1862 or 1863 Rossetti called and made himself known. "I don't think," says Mr. Marks, in recalling the circumstance, "I was ever so impressed by anybody in my life. As I looked at him, entranced, I thought of Shakespeare. He was the most amusing

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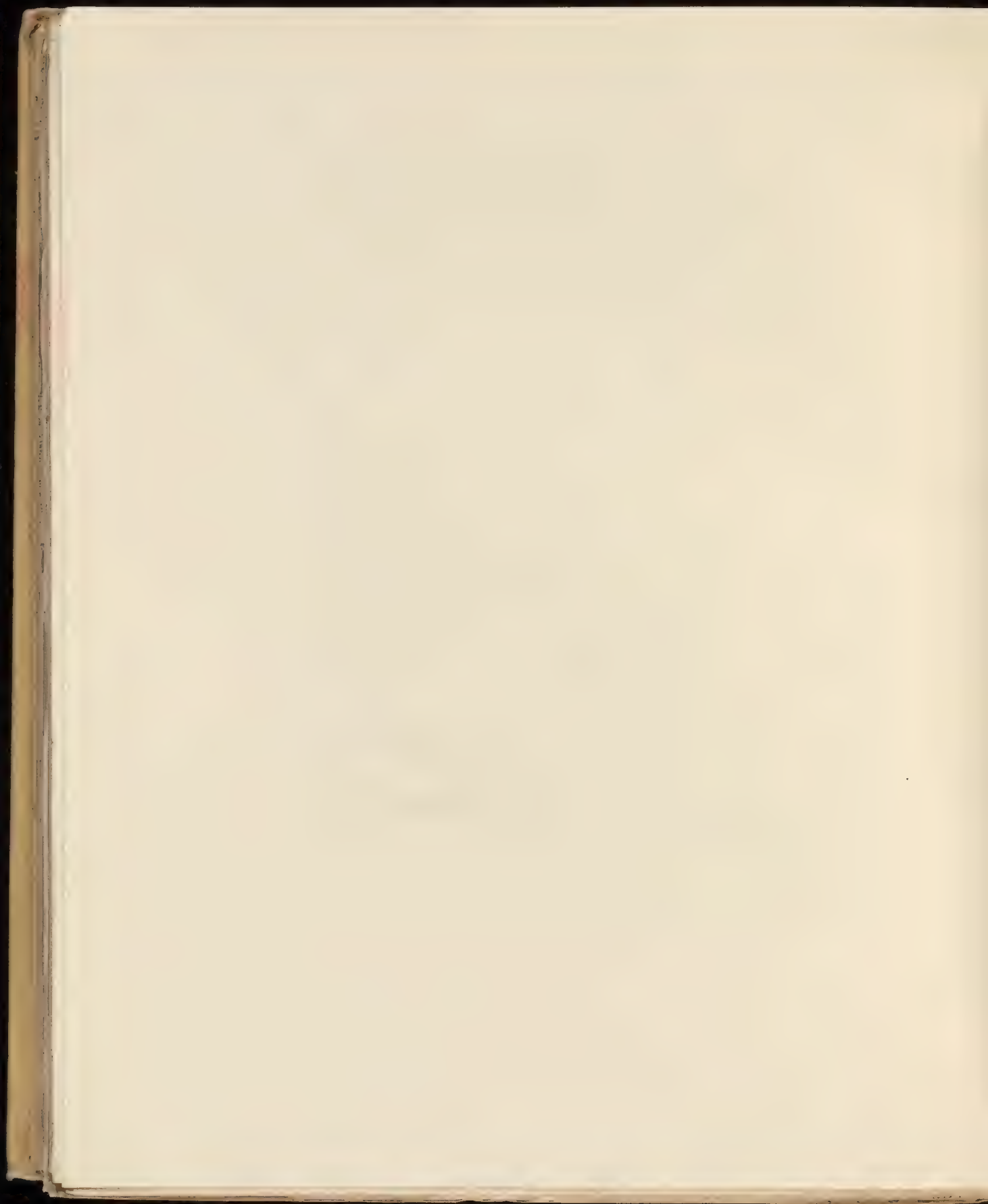
and at the same time the most intellectual man I ever met. He told me he wanted some Blue China. I promised to comply with his request. I also accepted his invitation to call and see his collection. I called. Well, it was a poor collection, and consisted chiefly of the common stuff which was to be picked up in London at that time. We did not talk about Blue China to begin with, for a picture that was on the easel at the time, the *Venus Verticordia*, arrested my attention, and, well, almost took my breath away. Our arrangement was soon made. I was to collect him some of the finest examples. 'I will send you a good buyer,' said Rossetti, 'but I must have the first pick.' That buyer was Mr. Louis Huth. It was characteristic of Mr. Huth that he never asked the price, and always, with one exception, paid the sum that was invoiced. Once, however, he found a ginger-jar, for which he was charged £15, expensive. It was sold eventually to Mr. Andrews for £300. 'Hawthorn,' Rossetti's naming, has been its designation since it was in his hands.

"Mr. Whistler was the next collector who came my way. He went systematically to work. Instead of describing what he wanted, he made a sketch of the pieces he was desirous of acquiring as a commencement. Any one who examines the vivid little drawing will observe what feeling the artist had for the exquisite beauty of the designs. Even in black-and-white the original colour and glaze are indicated."

The name of Mr. Louis Huth has been mentioned. That eminent collector and connoisseur is known for his fine taste and distinction as a virtuoso wherever the Arts are intelligently discussed. He is in the very first rank of his order. It is not only as a collector of Blue China that Mr. Huth is famous. But, inasmuch as he was one of the first to gather together exquisite examples of the precious ware, he is made a contributor of a page of the *Romance of Collecting* to illustrate a page in the narrative of his friend Mr. Orrock's experiences. The following letter tells the story:—



BLUE HAWTHORN JAR



James Orrock

"DEAR MR. ORROCK,—You wish to know the history, &c., of how I became possessed of my hawthorn pot, which has the reputation of being one of the finest, if not *the* finest, in London, although in looking at yours to-day I do not perceive its superiority.

"My pot was bought by a friend of mine some forty years ago at an old *bric-à-brac* shop in Bristol. Seeing it in the window he walked in and asked the old woman what the price of it was. 'Ah,' she said, 'that is a very fine pot, that is. I want a sovereign for it.' My friend remarked that he could not afford so much as that, but offered 10s. 'Give me 12s. 6d. for it,' said the woman, 'and the pot is yours.' My friend paid the money and walked away with the pot. For some years after I used to see it in his drawing-room, and I frequently teased him to let me have it—so frequently that, at last, I suppose to put an end to my importunity, he agreed to let me take it away with me on my giving him for it £25—a price perhaps he thought prohibitory. I at once paid him the money, and triumphantly bore the pot off, very pleased to possess it, but at the same time thinking inwardly that rather a mean advantage had been taken of my anxiety to get it.'

"Soon after the mania for Blue-and-White sprang up, and numerous have been the offers by 'the trade' made to induce me to part with my pot, some of them almost fabulous.—Sincerely yours,

"LOUIS HUTH."

Without naming the "almost fabulous" sum that has been offered for the pot, be it said that it is very substantially in excess of the initial stage of "four figures."

Time proved with what leaps and bounds Blue China had advanced in value. Both the Rossetti and the Whistler collection came into Mr. Murray Marks's hands for redispersal. The history of the hawthorn pot which Mr. Huth thought "expensive" may be taken as essentially typical. When, in 1878, the magnificent collection of Blue and White Nankin porcelain made by Sir Henry Thompson was brought together, exhibited, and permanently chronicled in a

James Orrock

catalogue *de luxe*, with illustrations by Mr. Whistler and the accomplished owner of the gems, the art received one of its most splendid memorials in England. The catalogue was a "scarce" and "rare" work from the moment it left the press. To read the inscription facing the fly-leaf is to make the hunter's mouth water: "Only two hundred and twenty copies printed, of which one hundred are for private circulation."

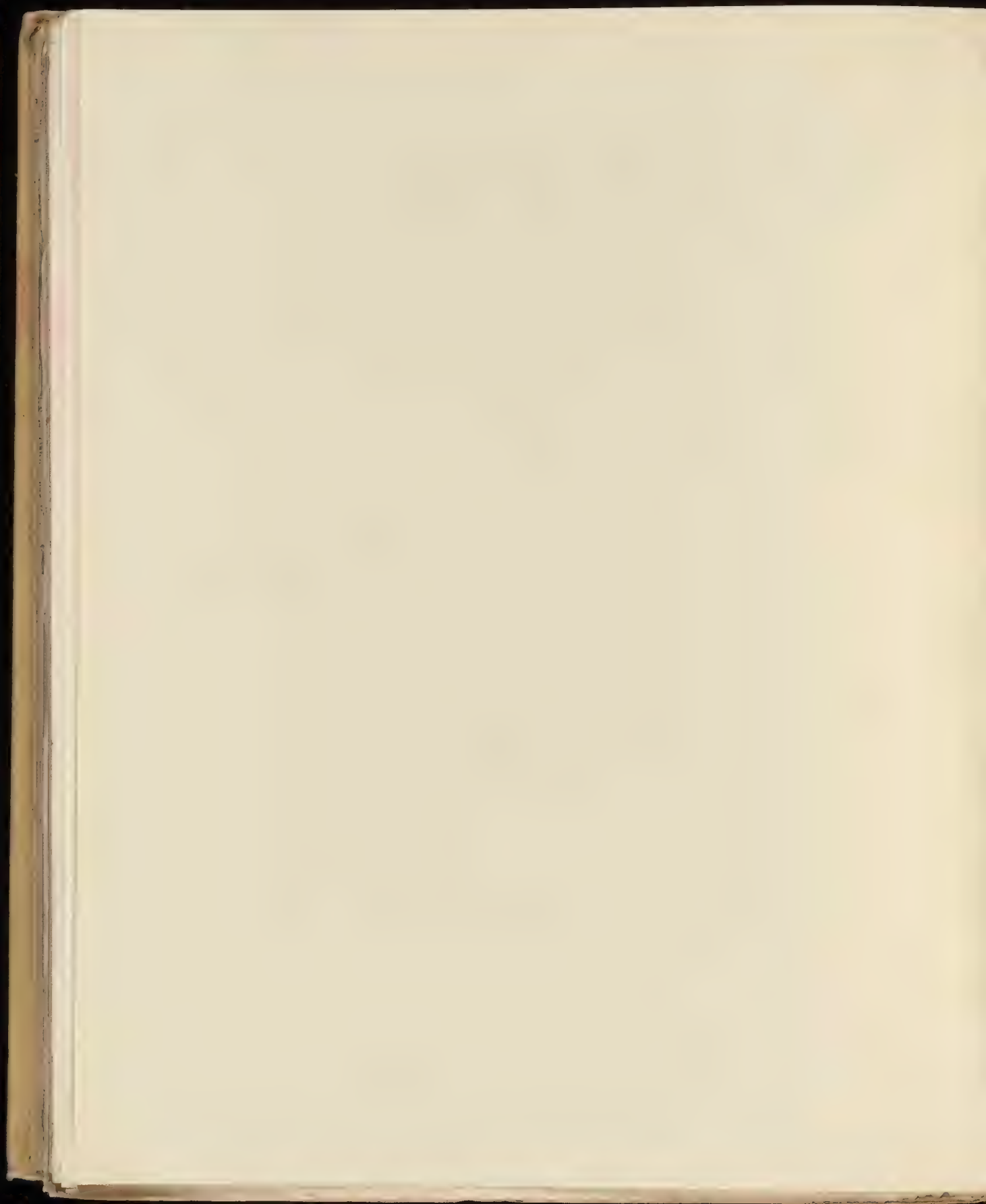
In the preface written by Mr. Murray Marks twenty-one years ago, that authority says: "It was in the sixteenth century, through the Dutch, and Portuguese merchants trading with China, that Europe first became acquainted with the beautiful art practised by the Chinese, of painting in blue upon white porcelain under glaze. Many of the specimens of this manufacture imported at that time are still in existence, and the costly manner in which some of them are mounted, in the Renaissance style, bears witness to the great esteem in which they were held by Europeans. During the latter half of the seventeenth century the Dutch merchants began to import the finest specimens in large quantities, and it was at this period that many valuable collections were formed in Holland, several of which remain intact to the present time. This beautiful ware appears to have met with due appreciation also from the crowned heads of Europe,¹ notwithstanding the warlike and troublous nature of the time; for collections were formed by the Emperor Leopold I., the Elector of Bavaria, Augustus the Strong, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, and the Prince of Orange. How rich this last collection must have been, the specimens still to be seen at Hampton Court Palace are evidence. To the warlike Elector of Saxony we owe the magnificent collection of the Japan Palace at Dresden.

¹ One of the short-hand notes which Dr. Johnson made on his French tour (1775) is curious. "Oct. 12, Thursday.—Thence to Gagnier's house, where I saw rooms nine, furnished with a profusion of wealth and elegance which I never had seen before—Vases—Pictures—*The Dragon China*." That "the dragon" was of the rarest may be safely inferred. Otherwise it would not have arrested the attention of the purblind tourist, who made a note of it for future use. Dr. Johnson adds, "The whole furniture said to have cost £125,000."



SHERATON CABINET

With Hawthorn Ginger Jars and Old Nankin Blue



James Orrock

"It is only during the last twenty years that Nankin China has recovered from the unmerited neglect into which it fell in common with other works of art during the period of depression which followed the French Revolution and the wars consequent thereon. The choice collections of Mr. Whistler, Mr. D. G. Rossetti, Mr. Louis Huth, and, later, that of Sir Henry Thompson, have given an impulse to that appreciation for this branch of decorative art which has spread so rapidly, and has naturally caused so great and so just a rise in the value of specimens of fine quality and design."

At a supper given by Mr. Marks to a number of his friends, chiefly men of "light and leading" in the arts who were known or supposed to be interested in the Sir Henry Thompson collection, the guests supped off Blue China. An eminent critic—in one of the arts—was a guest. He overflowed with enthusiasm. He saw nothing, he could converse about nothing, but this translucent "Blue." "Look at that!" he exclaimed, as a servitor approached, carrying with extreme care, as he had a right to do, a magnificent dish of the true brand. "Could France, could England produce anything like it? Observe that exquisite pink on that lovely blue!" The exquisite pink was pickled salmon.

It is in connection with connoisseurship and *expertise*, and to do honour to one of the most distinguished of their professors, that Mr. Orrock smilingly expands and waxes eloquent. "Yes, sir, I had the honour of knowing Charles Augustus Howell. It was my late friend, Captain May, R.I., who introduced me to the well-known (I wish I could find a synonym for another adjective that is in my mind) virtuoso, humorist, linguist, and conversationalist, the traveller who knew men and cities, the man of the world. May arranged to take me to Howell's artistic house at Fulham. We went thither one dark evening, and after discharging the cab within a short distance of the virtuoso's abode, sought the entrance thereto on foot. The door was not easy to discover. The house was surrounded like a prison or a monastery with a high wall. Captain May,

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who had been there before, at length found a portal and rung a bell. This summons had to be repeated, with anything but reassuring effect. In the case of one visitor, at least, it somehow sounded uncanny. Poor dear old May and myself must have both felt the solemnity of the moment, for we conversed in whispers. He was going to make another tug at the bell handle when I protested, saying—or whispering—‘Don’t, for goodness’ sake. Let us go away. You can bring me another time, by daylight. It *is* late, you know.’ At that moment the door was opened by a terrier-looking boy in buttons, every inch a cockney and as sharp as pickles. The first thing he said, looking hard at me, was ‘Mind the dog.’ A ferocious strangulated barking, apparently close at hand, made the young imp’s warning only too significant. I, employing a propitiatory tone, asked if the dog could get at us? ‘Well,’ he said, with surpassing impudence, ‘you are a fat un, but if you squeeze yourself up close to the wall you may pass him.’ The oddest things cross your mind at such moments. I found myself thinking of Quilp and Mr. Sampson Brass. Again I urged May to abandon the enterprise. I fancy I had almost persuaded him to go back when Buttons said, ‘Give me your hand.’ Guided by the page, I kept clear of the dog. We were then ushered into a large low room and kept waiting a long time, it seemed to me quite half-an-hour, and my patience was exhausted. I said, ‘Well, May, I am off,’ and I rang the bell to inform Buttons of my resolve. The boy left the room, and, presently returning, showed us into another apartment, where we found the magnificent Charles Augustus and a friend quietly enjoying coffee and cigars. On being presented by May he said, ‘Well, Orrock, I seem to have known you for years.’ (I had never met him before.) ‘I have seen your photo, which makes me think it a long and intimate acquaintance. Have some coffee and tobacco.’ I declined the former but smoked with him. We remained for perhaps an hour, during which time Howell showed us many things of interest, and nothing that was not fine and artistic. ‘Blue’ was his chief speciality. He had also, however, some exquisite English furniture,



GROUP OF OLD NANKIN BLUE AND WHITE BOTTLES AND VASES



C

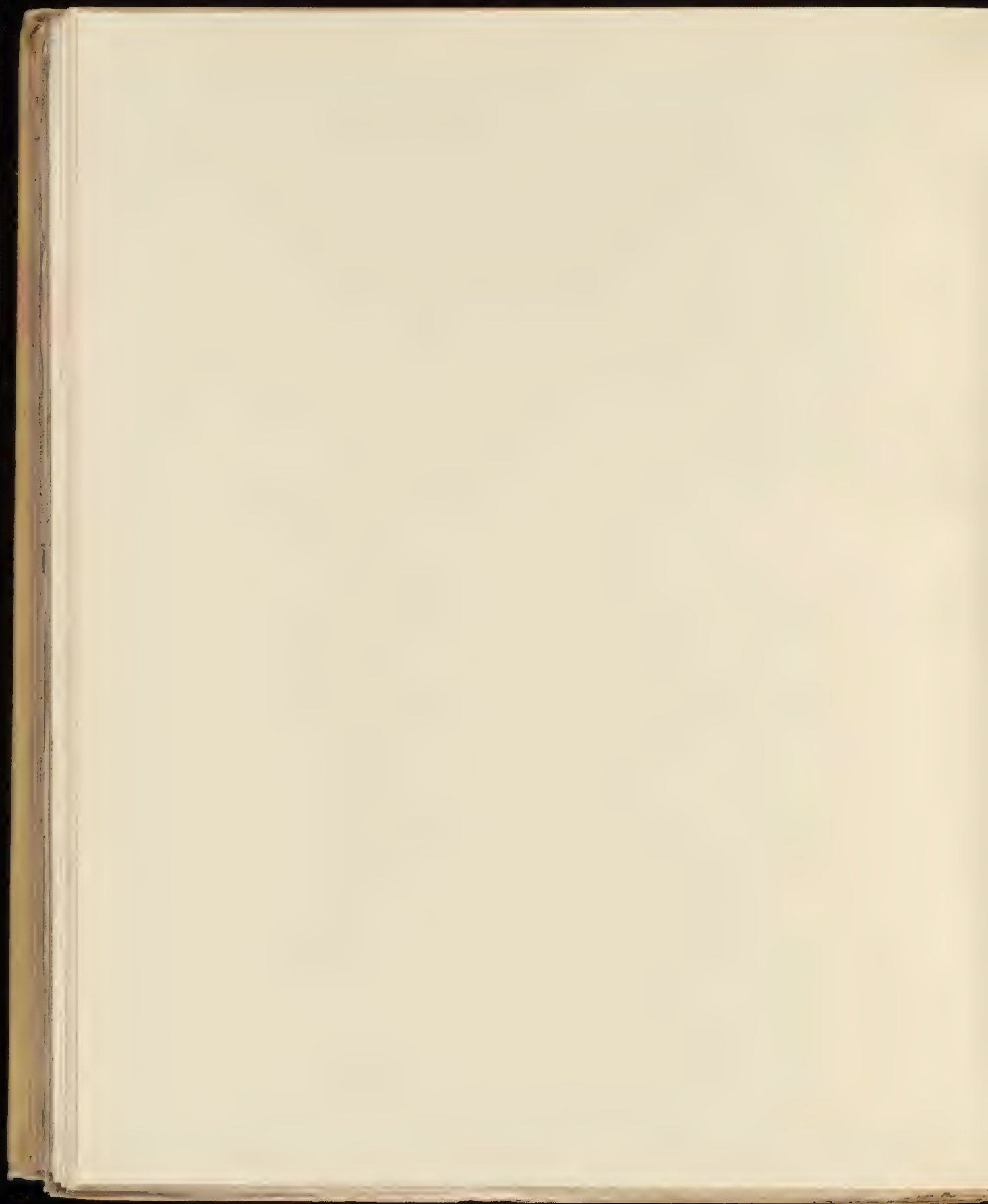
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C

- A. OLD NANKIN BLUE BOTTLE OF HOP PATTERN
- B. OLD NANKIN PAIR OF LIZARD PATTERN BOTTLES
- C. OLD NANKIN PAIR OF TIGER LILY PATTERN VASES



James Orrock

and a number of pictures by Rossetti and Burne-Jones, artists he greatly admired. I thanked him for his courtesy, and, as it was then approaching midnight, said I must take my departure. He exclaimed, 'No, no, no, Orrock. You are here, and here you must remain to be introduced to Mrs. Howell and some of her friends, who are with her in the drawing-room. And you must stay to dinner. We dine at midnight, and you shall taste my Portuguese soup and admire my old Dresden dinner service.' I excused myself, but in vain. 'No, no, no!' was repeated. Remain I must.

"After having effusively introduced Mrs. Howell and her friends, Charles Augustus haled me to the kitchen, in order that he—this man so various—might display his mastery of the culinary art. He took off his coat and bared his arms, and buried them—I mean the arms—in a wooden trough which contained some kind of liquid. Into this he put mussels, spices, lemons, mushrooms, and so forth, and tossed up the mixture in the proverbially insane manner prescribed for a salad. The operation ended, he restored himself, and we rejoined Mrs. Howell's party, which, I ought perhaps to have mentioned, comprehended Miss Rosa C——, a luxuriant-haired ideal model of the cult of the painters of the time. About 12.30 A.M. dinner was announced, and the Howell-Portuguese soup began the banquet. But the pottage was so spiced and peppered, that the guests who partook of it set up a hiccougging chorus which seemed to have been anticipated on the part of the humorous host. He, however, and his belongings enjoyed the soup without suffering from spasms.

"On returning to the drawing-room, Charles Augustus apologised for not being able to show me his two renowned hawthorn-pots of Nankin blue. I expressed my disappointment, and he then proceeded to minutely describe them, at the same time stating that they had been stolen from him. One of them, of a magnificent deep blue, he said was known as the Barberini pot from its resemblance to the deep ground of the real Barberini vase, called the

James Orrock

Portland Vase,¹ which was in the British Museum. As I had myself, a short time previously, purchased just such a pot, I felt a cold shiver run down my spine when Howell described his stolen treasure. When he also described the companion one, I felt certain from his description of the fracture in it and the repairs in the lid—quite familiar to me—that the pair I knew so well must be the missing jars. I left with thoughts too deep for words. Before taking my leave, Howell promised to call on me one day soon. He and Miss Rosa C—— did me that honour one night about twelve o'clock. My wife and I had been to a theatre, and were having a slight supper before retiring to rest. Howell, in his grand manner, apologised for the lateness of his call, but the light in the window as he was passing attracted him. The young lady's long hair, which she incidentally set free, dismayed Mrs. Orrock; but I explained *sotto voce* that the lovely creature belonged to the prevalent cult,

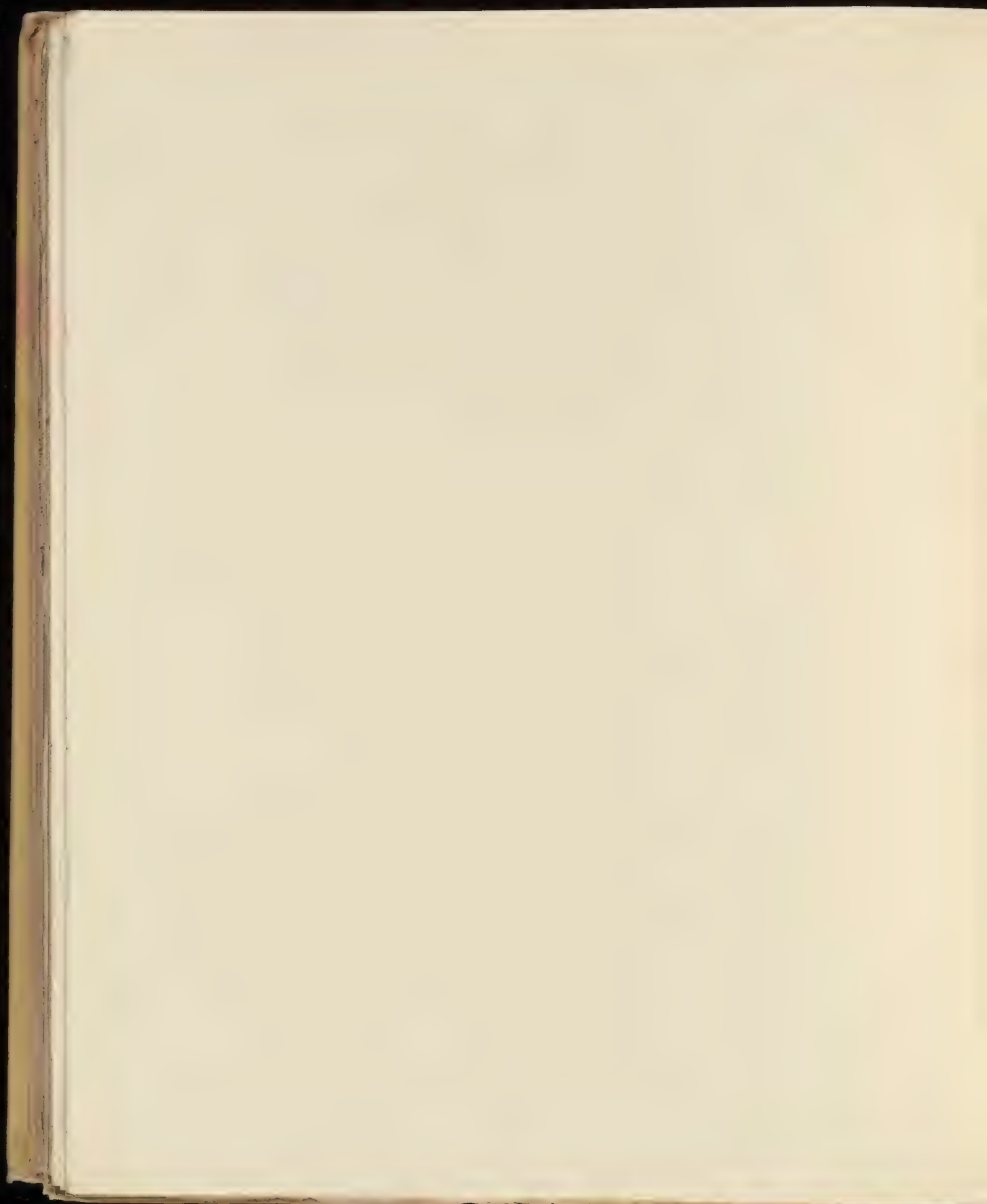
¹ "The Portland Vase was found in a marble sarcophagus in the Monte del Grano, near Rome, about the middle of the sixteenth century, and was afterwards deposited in the Barberini Palace, where it remained until 1770, when it was purchased by Byres, the antiquary, who sold it to Sir William Hamilton, of whom it was bought for 1800 guineas by the Duchess of Portland, at the sale of whose property it was bought in by the family for £1029. The ground of the vase is of dark blue glass, and the design is cut in a layer of opaque white glass, the figures standing out in bold relief. The composition is classical; it is supposed by some to represent the meeting of Peleus and Thetis on Mount Pelion, and Thetis consenting to be the bride of Peleus, in the presence of Poseidon and Eros. On the bottom of the vase, which is detached, is a bust of Atys. This vase is considered one of the principal ornaments of the Museum, and till 1845 it was as perfect as when it was first fashioned. In that year a drunken mechanic, named William Lloyd found his way into the Museum, and appears to have taken a dislike to the vase, a feeling which he gave vent to by deliberately hurling at it a stone which was lying close at hand; the result was that this peerless vase, as well as the glass case which contained it, was smashed to pieces. The man was at once taken before the magistrate, who sentenced him to pay the cost of damage to the case, but had no power to commit him for breaking the vase, except at the instigation of its ducal owner, who happened at the time to be out of town. In the meantime the money was paid, and the fellow was accordingly discharged. Although the vase was literally smashed into a thousand pieces, the fragments were carefully collected, and a drawing made of them which is preserved. The fractured pieces were afterwards replaced and cemented together by Mr. Doubleday, a gentleman who had for a long time been engaged at the Museum in repairing pottery and sculpture, and the manner in which he accomplished his task was so far successful that the exquisite form and proportions of the vase have been restored in such a way that scarcely a blemish can be detected. The vase is ten inches high, and its diameter seven inches at the broadest part near the centre, and it has two handles. It diminishes gradually towards the base, and more rapidly upwards into the narrow neck, which again opens towards the lip by a graceful flower-like expansion. Copies of the vase were executed by Wedgwood."—*Old and New London*.



GREY-BLUE OLD NANKIN VASE WITH RAISED FLOWERS, AND TWO PAIRS OF BOTTLES IN
OLD NANKIN BLUE.



THREE BEAKERS OF RAISED HAWTHORN ON BLUE GROUND: OLD NANKIN



James Orrock

and serenity was restored. That same cult accounted for so much ! Both my nocturnal visitors smoked cigarettes, and Howell wandered about the room taking carelessly careful stock of everything it contained. Just before leaving he calmly said, 'Well, Orrock, I am glad to see you have my stolen pot, the Barberini, but where is the other?' I told him a friend had joined me in purchasing the pair from a London dealer of position, who had, we had every reason to believe, acquired possession of them in a regular way. Howell rejoined, 'Orrock, I make you a present of yours.' I thanked him for his liberal intentions, but declined to regard the transaction in any light save one. 'Mr. Howell,' I said, 'I have paid the dealer for my pot, and my friend has paid for his.' 'No, no, no!' exclaimed Howell, 'they are mine, and were stolen. Your friend will have to disgorge or pay. Yours, Orrock,' in his grandest manner, 'I present to you.' It is perhaps scarcely necessary to explain that neither I nor my innocent confederate in the purchase had come into the possession of stolen goods. The pots, I have every reason to believe, had been pawned, and sold only after the tickets had 'run out.'

"On the occasion of another visit to my house he gave me a further taste of his quality. He had the comprehensive and retentive as well as the seeing eye. I have no doubt that, after that second visit, he could have passed an exhaustive examination respecting every picture, drawing, and work of art in my possession. However, observing spots in the sky of a Cox drawing, he said if I would allow him to operate he could disperse them, he having mastered the art when he was Mr. Ruskin's secretary. I declined the offer, saying that I would rather send the drawing to Grisbrook, the well-known expert in such matters, because I knew from experience what he could do. Howell was well aware that I had made up my mind on the subject, but he was not the man to retire on a single rebuff. He pointed out that Grisbrook's method was more risky than his, which he described. His immediate object was, I fancied, to make me tremble at his daring. 'Mr. Orrock,' he said,

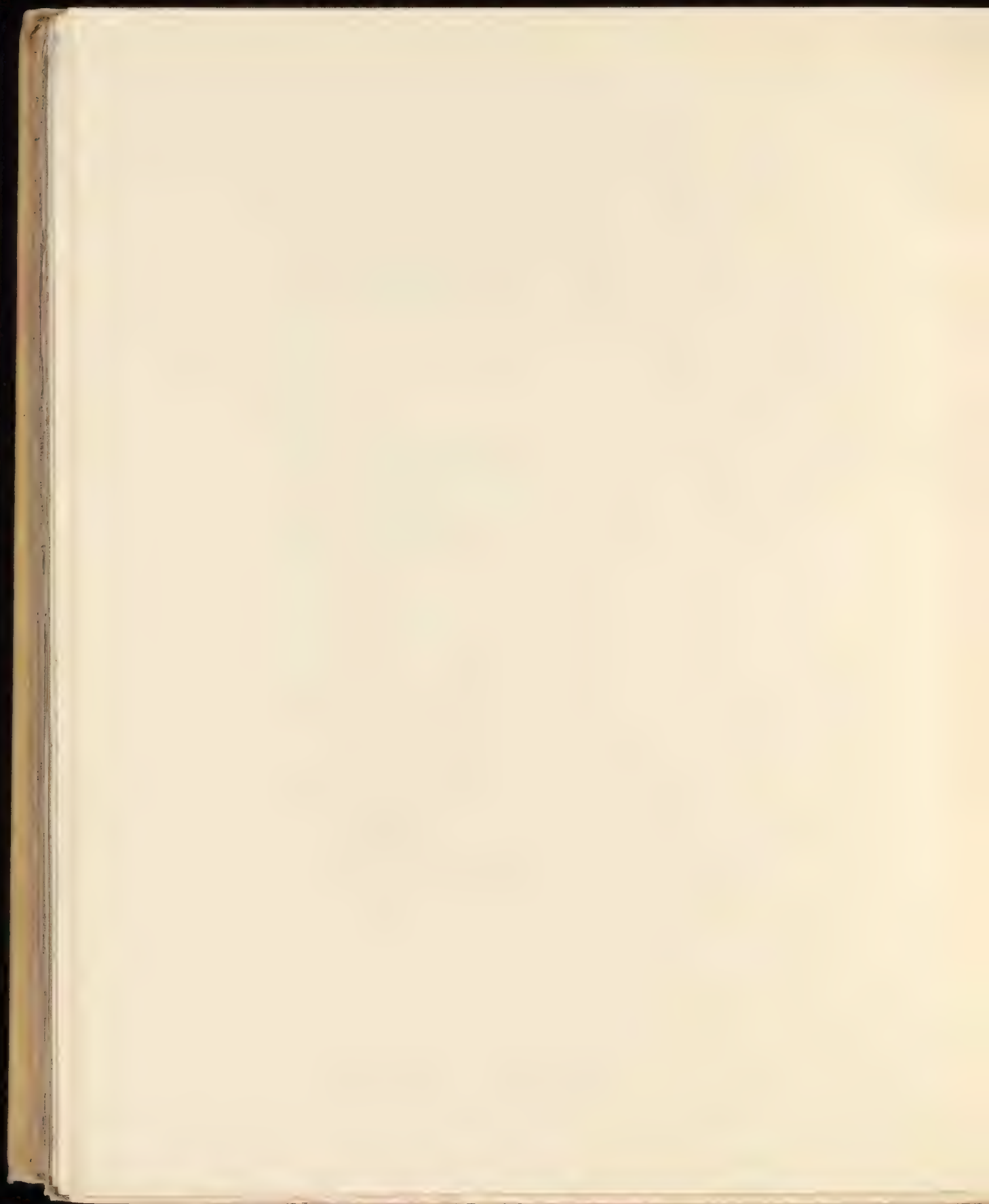
James Orrock

'if I had that beautiful drawing under my care, I would first carefully remove it from the mount and lay it upon a wet blanket. After leaving it for about two hours I would place another wet blanket on the top of it, and six hours afterwards the spots would disappear.' 'No doubt,' I rejoined, 'but what about the colours? Would they come out fresh and fine? But you shall have the Cox drawing, Mr. Howell, on one condition. I will first take a piece of spotted old Creswick paper, which I happen to have, and after painting rich colouring into it, submit it for your experiment. If you remove the spots without disturbing the colours, you shall have the drawing.' Howell, after an intent perusal of my countenance, said, 'Ah! my friend, I feared you were a man of little faith. Now I am certain. When I fence with you again, sir, I shall choose a more subtle weapon.' Wonderful man, Charles Augustus Howell! But we understood each other."

Twice has Mr. Orrock had his sense of humour tickled by meeting with his reputation as a connoisseur and finding it used as "something to conjure with." On both occasions Leicester was the scene of the little comedy. As one of the occurrences in question had to do with the fame of the collector of rare china, a recital of it is made here. A few years ago, when the Architectural Society of Leicester held a series of meetings and conversazioni, London architects and artists were invited to take part in the proceedings. Mr. Orrock was, as a matter of course, one of those who were specially invited. Spaces were allotted for stalls to dealers in works of art, and to others, and there were choice objects of art for sale. In making the round of the bazaar, accompanied by his niece (herself an accomplished water-colour painter and her uncle's pupil), Mr. Orrock's attention was drawn to a vase which looked like a piece of the Ming period, and an example of what is known as *sang-de-bœuf*. The stall-keeper asked the observer what he thought of it. Mr. Orrock replied that it seemed to be a good specimen, but he thought it was modern. The vendor, in a tone of lofty asperity, rejoined with, "Do you know what you are looking at?"



THREE OLD CHINESE "SANG DU BŒUF" BOTTLES



James Orrock

Mr. Orrock said yes, he thought he did, and repeated the observation which had made the dealer ireful: the piece in question looked modern. "Where have you seen a *sang-de-bœuf* vase, sir?" Mr. Orrock replied with a question to the same effect—"Where have *you* seen one?" "At South Kensington," was the reply. "There are none there," said Mr. Orrock (Mr. Salting's fine specimens were not yet at the Museum). "Well," said the cornered stall-keeper, "at the British Museum." Again the answer came, "There are none there." Exasperated by these repeated rebuffs from an individual who spoke with the authority of one who had obviously made himself acquainted with the ceramics in the South Kensington and British Museums, the merchant shifted his ground. With an air that bordered on the triumphant, he exclaimed, "Then I have seen them at 48 Bedford Square, at the house of a man named Orrock!" "Indeed," said the undismayed questioner in his mildest manner; "then you know that gentleman?" "Oh yes," said the vendor with restored confidence, "I know him very well." "Do you think I might see *sang-de-bœuf* vases there?" "Perhaps you might," was the reply; "only, Mr. Orrock is a queer sort of person, and is sometimes difficult to approach.—But you say you know him well?" "To be sure I do; very well indeed. I have been in his house scores of times." The rest was *not* silence. As he turned away Mr. Orrock said, "I can hardly think you have. It will perhaps surprise you to hear that I am Mr. Orrock, that I reside at 48 Bedford Square, and that I never saw you before in the whole course of my life."

Collectors of such precious things as flawless pieces of old Nankin or Damascus ware should be stoics of the sternest mould if they would live their lives at peace with themselves, their servants, and those who by accident or design are brought within destructive distance of their inestimable treasures. Madmen like the crazy sot who smashed the Portland Vase are rare. Clumsy or nervous meddlers with fragile objects of art are not. The "butter-fingered" house- or parlour-maid (to quote the schoolboy term of

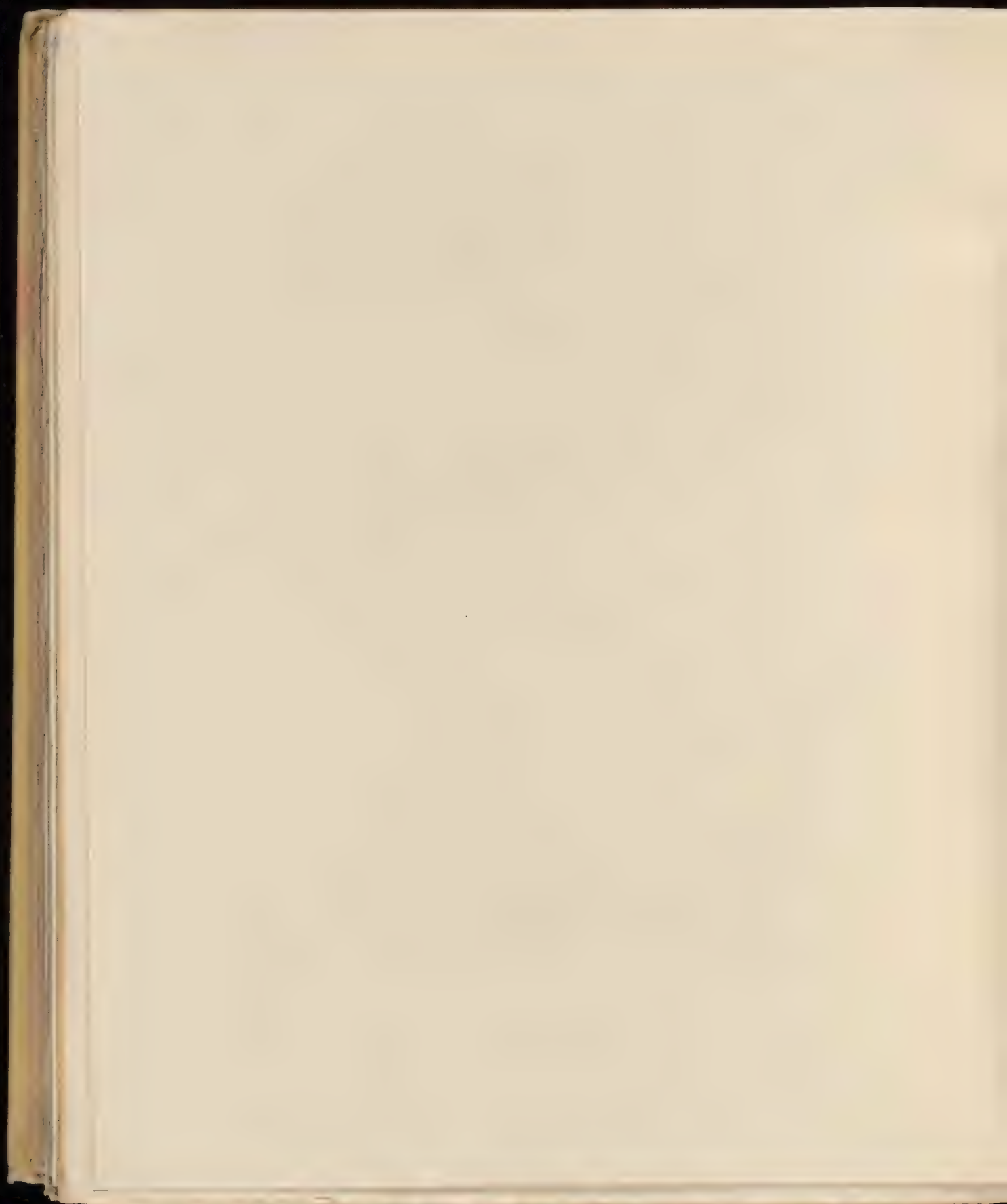
James Orrock

derision) is deplorably known to most households. What kitchen lacks its tradition of the no-handed servant who scarcely ever washed a dinner service without smashing dish or plate? "I have not done much harm, have I?" ruefully remarked an excellent friend of Mr. Orrock's whose exploration of the studio had recalled a familiar proverb. "Well, not much," was the somewhat cynical reply. "You have only smashed a hundred pounds' worth of china." The late Mr. Dana, the proprietor and editor of the *New York Sun*, was one of the best connoisseurs in certain departments of ceramic art of his time. "Some years ago," says Mr. Orrock, "he called and asked me if I would permit him to examine three important pieces of black enamel porcelain of the old Ming Chinese dynasty which he knew I possessed. I was only too pleased to show the vases in question to so fine a judge. He was an elderly gentleman, and apparently somewhat nervous, but when he requested permission to withdraw one of the vases in order that he might inspect it more closely, I of course complied. He was a brother collector, and I felt, if indeed I thought about it at all, that in his experienced hands the vase would be safe. In withdrawing one of the vases from the cabinet, the wide lip of the vessel struck a higher shelf upon which stood five rare Ming pieces of what is called the bamboo pattern. One of the pieces, a bottle, fell into the deep vase Mr. Dana was in the act of withdrawing and was smashed to atoms. He collapsed, and, as I saved him from falling, appeared going off in a swoon. I placed him in an easy-chair that was near and summoned my servant, who produced some brandy, with the aid of which the unfortunate gentleman was brought to. I accompanied him to his hotel, and saw him several times subsequently during his stay in London. We visited the South Kensington Museum together to see the china there. We, by tacit consent, never referred to the accident, but Mr. Dana, on the last occasion we met prior to his leaving for New York, urged me to name the sum he might be permitted to offer in satisfaction—the only one possible—of my loss. This I courteously but firmly



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Hawthorn Blue-Jankin Cases.



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refused to do. The misfortune was a pure accident, and—well, if he insisted on making the kind of recompense he proposed, it must be left entirely to him. And so we parted. Some months after, while I was sketching in Dumfriesshire, I received from Mr. Dana a draft for £75. In reply to a protest at the amount, Mr. Dana, who refused to hear of any abatement, entreated me to pay him a visit in New York, when he would have the pleasure of showing me his own magnificent collection, and of taking me to see others. I may say that immediately after the accident I gave strict orders that the broken pieces were not to be disturbed. I at the same time sent for Legris, the skilled restorer of things ceramic, to whom I consigned, untouched, the black enamel vase with the debris of my bamboo bottle. He took them away bodily, and in due time delivered the bottle, so beautifully restored that the keenest expert could not have picked it out from among its six sound companions. In my endeavouring to do so after the suite had been put together and mixed by the restorer, he made it a condition that I was not to breathe upon the pieces, because the heated varnish would at once reveal the restoration. He said his charge for the work was £7. On my protesting against the amount of his bill, Legris asked me if I knew the celebrated Portland Vase in the Jewel Room of the British Museum. I said yes, of course. He reminded me of its having been smashed to powder, and of its wondrous restoration. 'And,' he added, 'it is more valuable than ever. Now, Mr. Orrock, I have been in the trade for many years, but I can assure you that I have never seen such a group of bamboo Ming China as yours. It is, I should say, unique, and it is more valuable than ever.' I paid Legris the amount of his bill in full without a murmur."

M. Jacquemart,¹ who was born in 1808, and died on the 14th October 1875, and of whom it is said by his introducer that "he witnessed the reward and development of the taste for art which has become the feature of the present generation," omits all reference

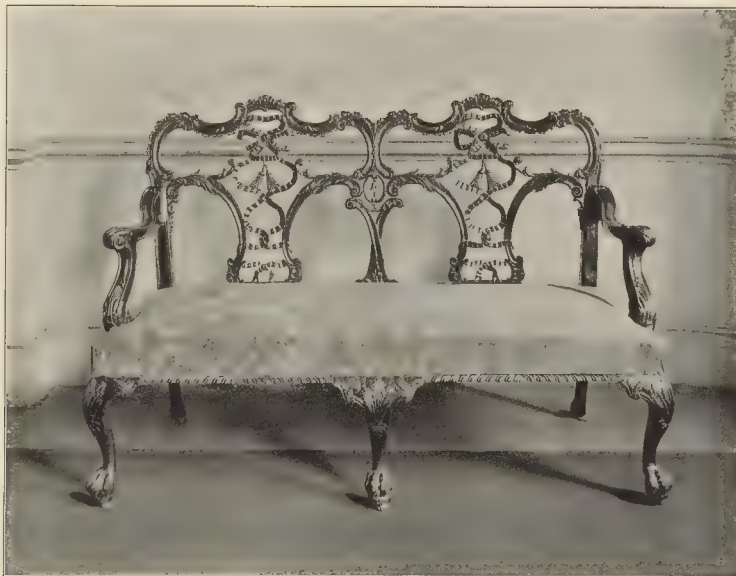
¹ "A History of Furniture:" translated from the French of Albert Jacquemart, edited by Mrs. Bury Palliser. Chapman & Hall, 1878.

James Orrock

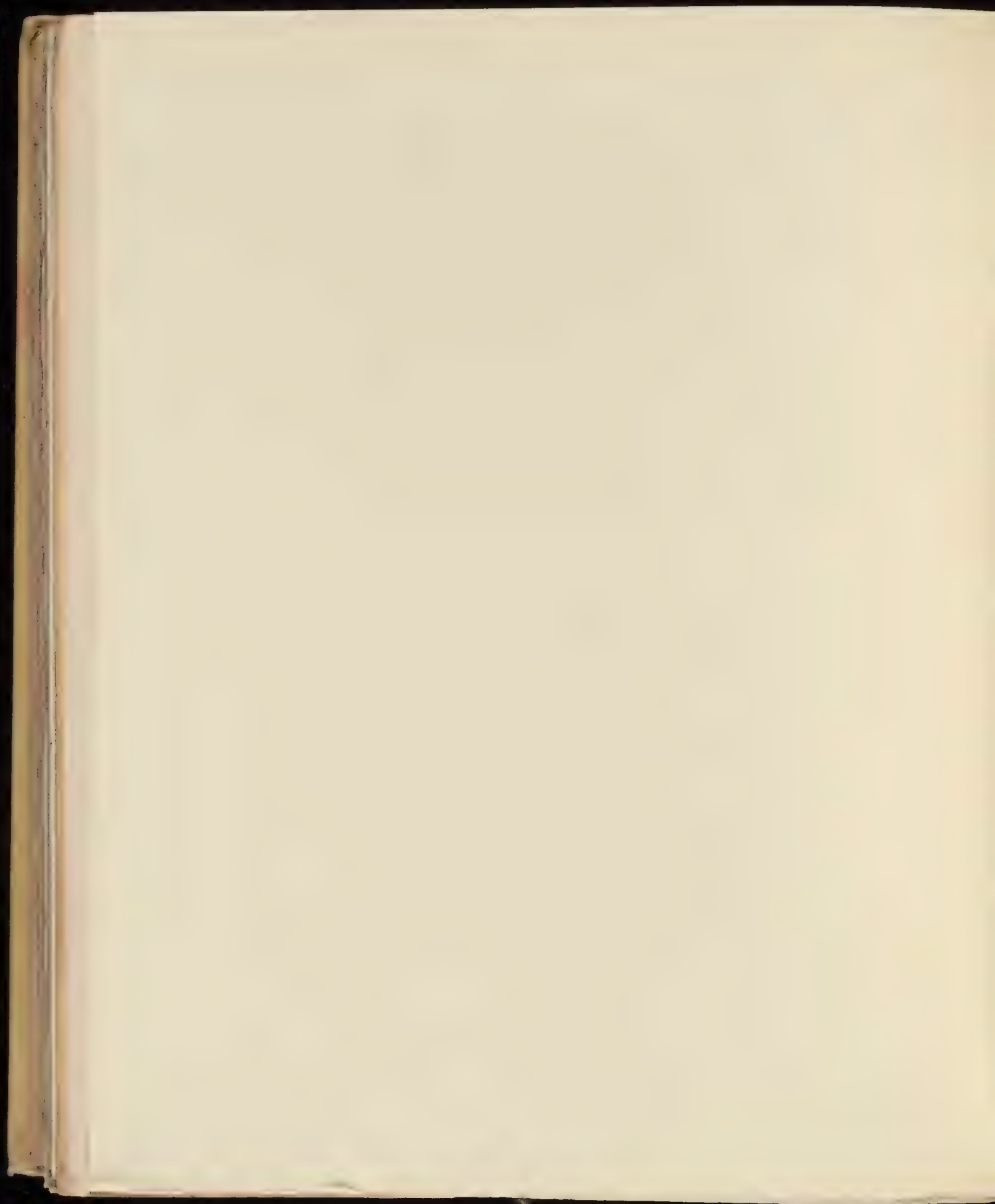
to England from his European survey of his subject. *Ergo* we have no furniture, "historical," "eclectic" or independently artistic in any shape or character that is the birthright of England! Whether one cares for such a discovery or not, it may be safely predicted that sooner or later a French explorer will add to the discoveries of Constable and Turner and of the great English portrait-painters an account of the eighteenth-century art craftsmen who produced the furniture during what an appreciatively exhaustive writer has aptly termed "The Chippendale Period."¹ It has been well said by the writer in question that "Chippendale, thoroughly eclectic in taste, mixed French, Gothic, and Chinese in one harmonious whole. The effect is so perfect that his furniture requires no further enrichment by inlay or painting. Both had been used before his day, and his avoidance of them is characteristic of the man. He saw everything with a carver's eye, and . . . the chisel remained his only mistress."

A confutation on the part of Mr. Orrock of one view of Chippendale may be introduced here. Said a somewhat imaginative admirer of the English furniture designed by the master, "It may be pure fancy, but it is one that a student of the more richly decorated work of Chippendale is reluctant to surrender, and that is that Grinling Gibbons influenced the famous craftsman. Walpole says of the famous sculptor in wood, 'There is no instance of a man before Gibbons who gave to wood the loose and airy lightness of flowers, and chained together the various productions of the elements with a free disorder natural to each species.' Finely, freely floriated examples of Chippendale's work, especially those wherein the carver has, as it were, tied the design together with a riband, seem, allowing, of course, for the rigid circumspection of the piece, to betray the Gibbons influence." "No, sir," replied Mr. Orrock, "not at all. Grinling Gibbons occupies, deservedly, a very high place as a wood carver. He, however, had his equals among the Spanish carvers

¹ "The Chippendale Period in English Furniture," by K. Warren Clouston. Debenham and Freebody and Edwin Arnold, 1897.



PART OF SUITE OF RARE CHIPPENDALE



James Orrock

and others of his period, who possessed the manual skill of producing flowers which might almost be mistaken for reality. The hanging tendrils and festoons were marvellously manipulated, and the undercutting was, of course, wonderful. To compare that kind of carving with the work of Chippendale, Hepplewhite, Sheraton, and other English master-craftsmen in wood is absurd, if for no other, for one simple radical reason. Gibbons's carving, for example, is in alto-relievo, whereas the work of the group I have named is basso-relievo. Then, the designs of Gibbons are rococo, while those of the great furniture art craftsmen are severe, classic, and elegant. The taste of the connoisseur is satisfied with the beauty of the one, but not as to artistic design with that of the other. In a word, Gibbons reproduces nature without great art, while the English group of carvers produce the most sensitive and beautiful art with a classic interpretation of nature."

Chippendale *built* his chairs to last, and constructed his furniture otherwise on lasting principles, being a scientific cabinetmaker as well as an artist, who dealt with the wood with a sculptor's hand and a sculptor's sense of what was artistic. It would encumber these pages to trace the evolution of English furniture up to the period. The argument which Walpole finds justly enough in favour of Hogarth's¹ inanimate unities leaves the character of the furniture distinctly set down. The identifiable Queen Anne chairs depicted in his prints are but crude specimens of the order. Artists and craftsmen worked hand and glove during the Chippendale period. (The famous cabinetmaker is mentioned as a person of distinction in the *Life of Nollekens*, the sculptor.) Chantrey's house was beautifully furnished, we are told. We may rest assured that it was furnished with artistic taste. Leslie says, in his *Life* by Tom Taylor: "Mr. Sockett has a set of chairs which had belonged to

¹ "The very furniture of his rooms describes the persons to whom they belong; a lesson that might be of use to comic authors. It was reserved to Hogarth to write a scene of furniture. The rake's levée-room, the nobleman's dining-room, the apartments of the husband and wife in marriage *à-la-mode*, the alderman's parlour, the poet's bedchamber, and many others, are the history of the manners of the age."—*Walpole's "Anecdotes of Painting."*

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Hayley. They are of carved mahogany, and designed by Flaxman. The centre of every back is a lyre." Mr. Orrock possesses a teapot and four salt-cellars which were designed by that great sculptor. In another part of the *Life, Leslie*, after upholding the employment for decorative purposes of Chinese in preference to Sèvres porcelain, and extolling "the beauty of a Persian carpet," protested against "much of the mistaken and clumsy imitations of Louis Quatorze and mediæval styles of furniture," and deplored that the present century seemed "destined to leave behind it a confusion which will be distinguished only from those they mimic by the blunders that are unavoidable in all literal imitation in art, or even in manufacture." Howard, the Royal Academician, as related by his son, "was further occupied, not only in making designs for Wedgwood's pottery, but in actually painting on the vases themselves." He also made designs for Rundell and Bridge. "And yet," the biographer adds, "there are persons at the present day pretending that the fine arts were never connected with the manufactures of this country until they set it on foot; and in this impudent pretence they are supported both by artists and manufacturing houses, who are fully cognisant of the false statement, and who ought to be ashamed of allowing their names to appear to guarantee such a misstatement." It was when brainless machinery stepped in and pushed the artist aside that the decadence of art craftsmanship began.

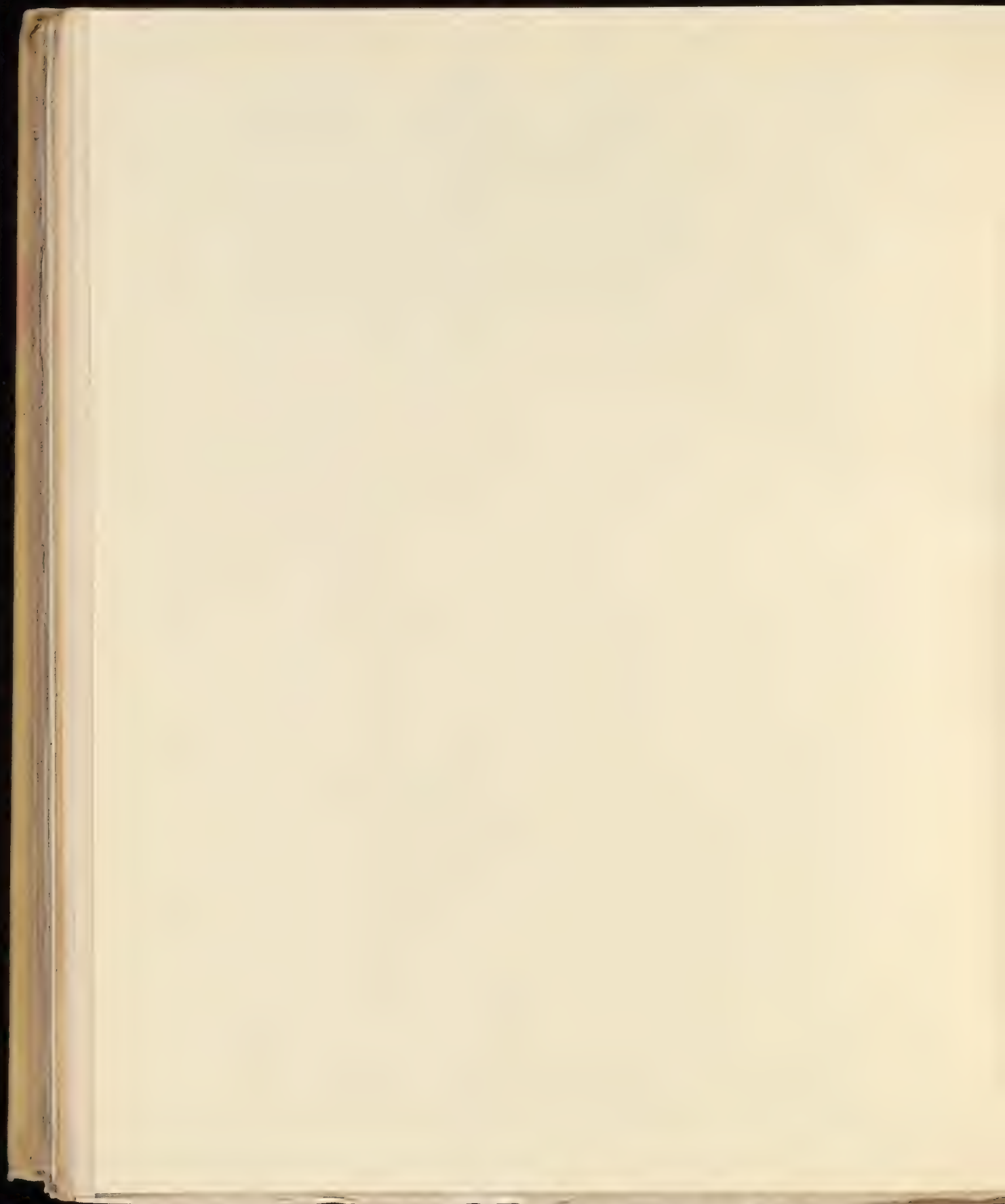
Of the fine art of English furniture Mr. Orrock possesses many perfect examples. Adam, Chippendale, Hepplewhite, Sheraton, and, in short, all the great masters and schools are opulently and beautifully represented; and, as has been already said, he resides in an Adam house. "After much careful study of, and close personal acquaintance with, fine typical examples of the English furniture from the Jacobean to the Georgian period," Mr. Orrock was convinced that no furniture in the world could, for make, shape, and ornamentation, successfully compare with our own. This he is assured is being more and more proved every day. Our English



QUEEN ANNE CHIPPENDALE CHAIRS WITH EAGLE HEADS



QUEEN ANNE CHIPPENDALE SETTEE



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metal-work and Wedgwood ware exhibit in the same degree the peculiar grace and spontaneity of the elastic English art. The lovely harmonies of colour in the blending of the various woods employed in the composition of the furniture partake of the colour-power of Reynolds, Gainsborough, Morland, and all our great landscape painters. No room looks so rich and grand as one furnished with English furniture, English pictures, and English silver, with a dash of fine Oriental colour. When that combination is artistically effected, there is in Mr. Orrock's words, "nothing more to be said, no more to be done; exposition and task are ended."

CHAPTER XXV

Mr. Orrock a lecturer on the English art—His "platform" at Leicester and Nottingham in 1881—Crome—"Two kinds of connoisseurs"—Lecture on the English art, London, 1885—"A nation of colourists"—Our Gothic—The classic art of Flaxman and the Adam brothers—English engravers—English water-colours—English independence in art: Reynolds and Gainsborough—Tribute to the Royal Academy—Healthy art—"English art"—Remarkable testimony of the Press—The Tate Gallery—Paper read at Sheffield—"Sheffield Plate"—The West Front of Peterborough Cathedral—How to restore it—The "Duck Lane" method.

FOLLOWING Mr. Orrock step by step through his career as a lecturer, and taking notes by the way, were a pleasant if easily possible task. The record, unfortunately, is imperfect. To compensate for omissions, we have the assurance that the doctrine of the preacher was the same yesterday and the day before as it is to-day, while the discourse has varied only in its application, according to the occasion and the congregation addressed. At Leicester he took as active a part in the proceedings of the Literary and Philosophical Society as the more serious calls on his time permitted. For the illustration of papers read by Mr. Williamson, the president of that institution, Mr. Orrock made a number of drawings. A book of the bye-laws of the John o' Gaunt Masonic Lodge, if yet extant, would display Mr. Orrock's skill in the art of illumination. This by the way. Mention has been made of an essay by Mr. Orrock on Ruskin, and the Ruskin exposition which he read before a public assembly in the Midlands. In the meantime, letters over his signature on art subjects had appeared in the press. It was as true of him then as it was some years later when the art-critic of the *Athenæum* wrote: "But one is always glad, whatever the reason, when one provokes Mr. Orrock into epistolisation. He never takes pen in hand without advancing the cause of true art, the cause we have all at heart." However, the success which

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crowned his first experiment as a lecturer led to other appearances in the same field. In the spring of 1881 he delivered a lecture at Leicester and Nottingham on "True Art." There would be no excuse for merely repeating a few passages of this discourse in a fragmentary form with even a slender connecting thread of context absent if Mr. Orrock had not, as displayed in former pages, dealt with the main subjects of his discourse—with Turner, for example—in separate essays. Certain sections are complete in themselves, and in so far as they fit with and complete what may perhaps be called the harmonious mosaic of his creed, they are given on their own merits. It was in reference to landscape painting, to which he chiefly confined himself, that Mr. Orrock said: "The present school is commonly called the Realistic school, in contradistinction to the Idealistic school, which was that of the masters. The realistic artist, with few exceptions, goes to Nature and paints what he sees, viz., the surface truths of Nature. A few years ago, more markedly than now, he boldly denounced the accumulated art of centuries, which he called an exploded art; he defied all the rules, technicalities, and artistic qualities of the art which has stood the test of ages, and put himself up as original. He painted Nature as she presented herself, without, in any way, selecting the beauties from the uglinesses, the rarer effects from the commoner ones. In a word, he painted haphazard, without choice of subject, stocks and rocks, reeds and weeds and stagnant waters, and called his productions pictures! The so-called idealistic artist, however, went to Nature with a thorough knowledge of the art of the masters, and, as in the case of Turner, his originality was the sequence of such knowledge, for no man had a more profound acquaintance with the modes and methods of the art of the great schools, not only in landscape, but in figure. Turner was the most ideal painter possible, and the most conventional also, and his devotion to the great masters is clearly proved by his painting in their manner at the meridian of his career. He, too, painted the truths of Nature, but not the *surface* truths—he painted the

James Orrock

deeper truths. He, for instance, painted light, bright intense light, half light or half shade, luminous both, full of harmonies and gradations, but silent withal; he painted to perfection that lovely glowing half-tone which is the key to all great pictures, and without which no picture can be worthy of the name; he painted light in the dark shade, chiaroscuro—no matter how deep the shade, you can always see into it, as it were into deep clear water, or into a precious stone. These are truths of Nature, but not surface truths. Turner painted space; he takes you from foreground to distance, on, on to the horizon, and brings you back again to the zenith; he painted infinity in colour and line."

Contrasting past with present in elucidation of his text, the "True Art" that "has no fashion and no change," the lecturer said: "In these days, when the art of painting has not only become a fashion but a fever—when everybody discusses art, and almost everybody practises it—the reflecting connoisseur pauses and wonders what will be the outcome of so much zeal! We seem now, in consequence of schools of art and literary teaching, to have the prospect of having so great a multitude of so-called artists that it becomes a matter of serious question whether even England in her best days of prosperity can hope to support them. The contrast between these times and those, for instance, of Crome and his contemporary landscape painters, is indeed startling. He, we all know, although one of the greatest of English masters, was despised and neglected, whereas nowadays a scrap 'done on the spot,' as it is called, will frequently command as high a price as that which Crome received for one of his best works."¹

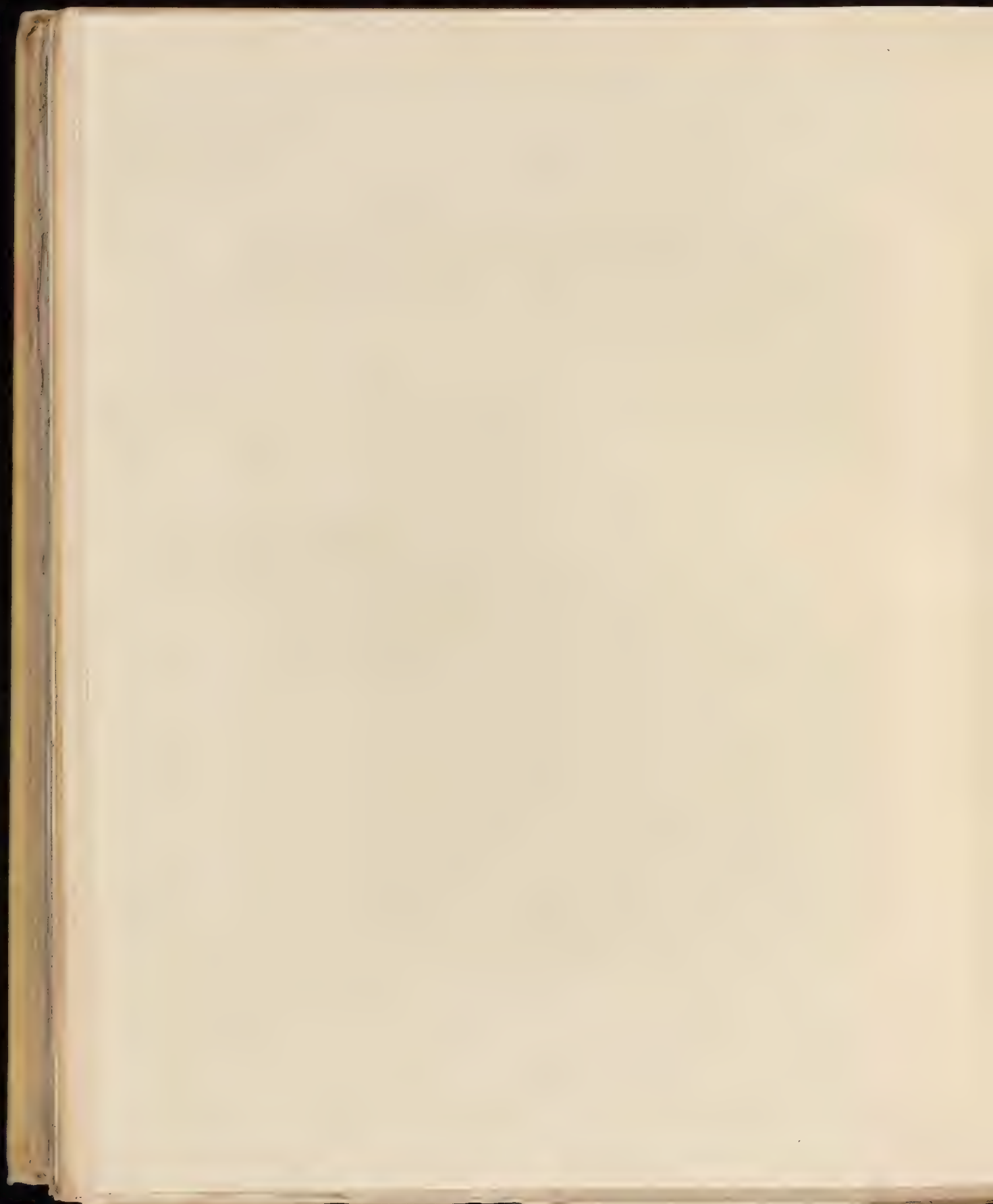
¹ "What hast thou to do with old Rome, and thou an Englishman? 'Did thy blood never glow at the mention of thy native land?' as an artist merely? Yes, I trow, and with reason, for thy native land need not grudge old Rome her pictures of the world; she has pictures of her own, 'pictures of England;' and is it a new thing to toss up caps and shout—England against the world! Yes, against the world in all, in all; in science and in arms, in minstrel strain, and not less in the art 'which enables the hand to deceive the intoxicated soul by means of pictures.'*

* Klopstock.



Alfred Sturges

Landscape on the River Stour.



James Orrock

"There are two kinds of connoisseurs," said Mr. Orrock in his lecture, "he who paints and is a judge, and he who judges but cannot paint; and it is not too much to say that the non-painting connoisseur is always a safer and better judge than at least fifty out of a hundred artists. The reason partly is that very few artists take any interest in other branches not practised by themselves, and there are hundreds who do not know the pictures in our own National Gallery of almost any other master except those in their own department of art. The connoisseur, on the contrary, is constantly studying the peculiar beauties of the finest art, no matter by whom produced. Of course, the *painter-connoisseur* is the better man always, although, as I have said, most people think that to be a true judge of anything, that judge must be a practical man. If this were so, the landscape painter should have no judgment of the works of a portrait- or figure-painter; and for such a man to appreciate a picture by Reynolds or Vandyke, it would be necessary to have the power to paint one; and to thoroughly enjoy and understand the beauties of a vase by Benvenuto Cellini, he ought to be able to make one! The simple truth is that any great

Seek'st models? to Gainsborough and Hogarth turn; not names of the world, maybe, but English names—and England against the world! A living master? why there he comes! Thou hast had him long, he has long guided thy young hand towards the excellence which is yet far from thee, but which thou canst not attain if thou shouldst persist and wrestle; even as he has done midst gloom and despondency—ay, and even contempt; he who now comes up thy creaking stair to thy little studio in the second floor to inspect thy last effort before thou departest—the little stout man whose face is very dark, and whose eye is vivacious; that man has attained excellence, destined some day to be acknowledged, though not till he is cold, and his mortal part returned to its kindred clay. He has painted, not pictures of the world, but English pictures, such as Gainsborough himself might have done; beautiful rural pieces, with trees which might well tempt the little birds to perch upon them; thou needst not run to Rome, brother, where lives the old Mariolater, after pictures of the world, whilst at home there are pictures of England; nor needst thou even go to London, the big city, in search of a master, for thou hast one at home in the old East Anglian town who can instruct thee whilst thou needst instruction; better stay at home, brother, at least for a season, and toil and strive midst groanings and despondency till thou hast attained excellence even as he has done—the little dark man with the brown coat and the top-boots, whose name will one day be considered the chief ornament of the old town, and whose works will at no distant period rank amongst the proudest pictures in England—and England against the world!—thy master, my brother, thy, at present, all too little considered master—Crome."—*George Borrow*, "*Lavengro*."

James Orrock

master's work is hopelessly beyond the power of any ordinary artist to execute, but does this prevent his appreciation of it?"

"The finest landscape painters are always true judges of colour and artistic feeling, and to be a first-class landscape painter, as I shall presently show, the artist must be himself a colourist, for on this, and almost on this alone, his rank depends. No great landscape painter has ever been other than a colourist, and his most searching qualities are always to be found in his silent or neutral tints. All the great painters for centuries—figure, landscape, and all else—have invariably been colourists, and I, for one, hold that this peculiar power is the chief bond of union between them throughout; a careful study of this will prove what I say. The connoisseur, therefore, be he painter or otherwise, has always this peculiar instinct, for it is born with him, so to speak, and no amount of training and hammering will ever supply its place; you might as reasonably hope to give tune where that gift is absent. Besides all this, the true judge, from his peculiar nature, is ever on the look-out for that which answers to his instinct, and by such a process of cultivation his perceptions are quickened. The connoisseur, then, is one of the most valuable of men, for through him, and him alone, the great art of the world has been religiously preserved. But, of course, all judges have not equal social influence, and many are of retiring habits, and may not have opportunities of recommending, or the means of purchasing, what they know to be fine. I may here remark that, curiously enough, almost without exception, the best and most searching judges I know never appeal to any literary critic, be he never so popular and renowned. On the contrary, they judge on the merits of the work alone; and when disputes arise, which happen almost daily, books, no matter how poetically written, are never consulted; and this for the plainest and best of reasons, that no word description whatever can supply the place of the keen perception of the subtle qualities which are alone found and expressed in the work itself. Many of those judges

James Orrock

are also non-painters, but give their opinions with almost unerring instinct."

In his lecture on "The English Art," delivered in the rooms of the Society for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts, No. 9 Conduit Street, in 1885, Mr. Orrock went, necessarily, over some of his former ground. He was preaching the same truths. There was, however, a fuller amplification of these in the disquisition—new arguments that branched from the parent tree, and fresh fruitage of illustration. In his life-long contention the English Art is the True Art, albeit not the whole of it. A few typical passages, culled here and there in a rapidly progressive perusal of the pamphlet, will serve to mark the lecturer's larger range:—

"We are a nation of colourists; we are, indeed, one of the three great nations of colourists of the world, beginning with the Venetians, and passing on to the Flemish and Dutch as one school, and lastly our own."

"But England has produced great art in other branches than painting. Our Gothic architecture—especially the Norman, Transition, and Early English—is more spiritual, more simple, more beautiful, and more thoughtful than any other Gothic whatever. Any one may have proof of this at Southwell Minster, near Nottingham, where those styles may be seen in perfection."

"The English have always had in addition a strong feeling for classic art, and Flaxman and the brothers Adam are the most prominent exemplars of it. It has been said that had Flaxman been a Greek and worked in the great Greek time, his rank would probably have been of the highest; but being an Englishman, and working for something like journeyman's wages to satisfy a commercial generation, his classic genius had to exist in a different field from that of Greece, where the art, and not the price, was the first consideration."

After extolling the art of the Adam brothers (an appreciation of which appears more than once in the pages of the present work), the art of the English School of Engravers on Copper and Wood,

James Orrock

Mr. Orrock passed to a consideration of "the most characteristic and original of all," the English Art of Painting in Water-Colours. There are so many other proofs of the varied eloquence of Mr. Orrock's exposition of the theme given in other pages, that it suffices to do no more than refer to the fact that necessarily English water-colour painting held a prominent place in his discourse on the English Art. Other points in his discourse admit of being recited devoid of comment. These, for example:—

"Perhaps the most pronounced instance of our English independence in art is to be found in the case of Reynolds and Gainsborough. Two men of almost equal power, and each possessing the most marked individuality; both living at the same time, and yet totally uninfluenced by each other in mode and method of artistic expression. Let us once lose this independence, and, like sheep, follow the bell-wether, then farewell to our artistic individualities."

"We are a nation, for the most part, of *impressionist* painters—true impressionists because true painters and healthy colourists, whose works hang in harmony among those of the masters of the great bygone schools. Amongst the old masters at Burlington House we saw examples of our great colourist-impressionists' work—for instance, the 'Penelope Boothby,' by Sir Joshua Reynolds, the 'Saltash,' by Turner, the portrait of Mrs. Hibbert, by Gainsborough, and others."

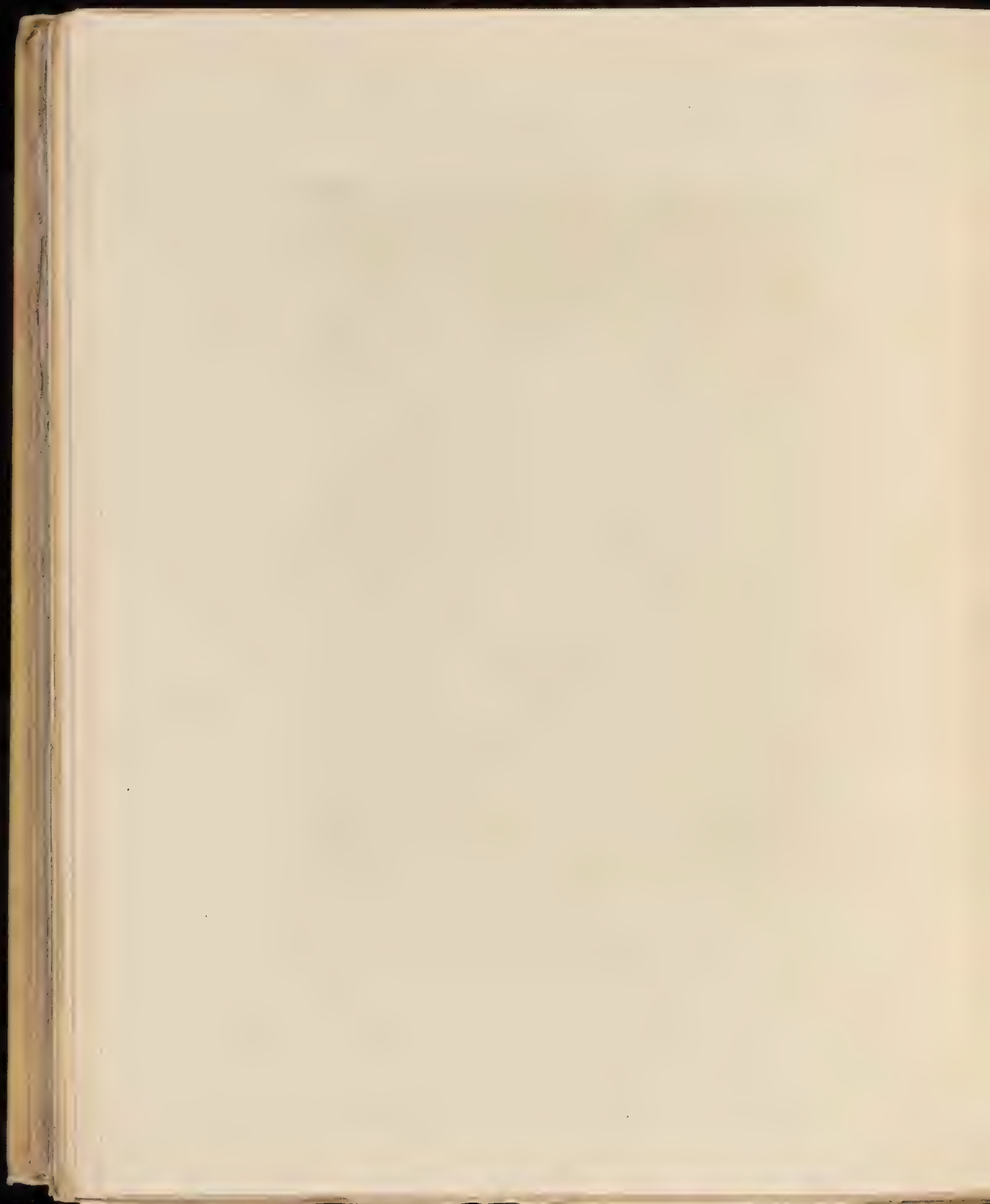
In his hearty and appreciative tribute to the Royal Academy, Mr. Orrock declared on the side of the supporters of a great national institution whose benefactions to art and artists would, were they fully known, astonish, if they did not silence, the majority of the glib critics of the ignorantly abused R.A. The Royal Institute of Painters in Water-Colours came in for the lecturer's laudation, and with reason. That body had then entered upon a new and manifestly prosperous phase of existence in Piccadilly; the galleries had proved extraordinarily attractive, and the lecturer had for his chairman the President of the R.I. A



By John Smibert del.

Engraved by J. Smith.

Miss Anne Catley.



James Orrock

forecast of the position which, in his view, America would take in the arts; and a glowing depiction of English landscape art, and a final word on the Cinderella of the arts—no longer in the ashes, but crowned and glorified—comprised the principal of the remaining features of the lecturer's discourse. In parting with it, a racy passage which stamps the man, while it lights up with vivid humour one view of his mission, seems to demand citation. Exclaims he: "Let *healthy* art be our standard, and let us resist all the inroads from sensationalism." Then, continuing, he says: "It is pitiable to see the morbid and unearthly productions of some of those so-called æsthetics. A distinct species of madness certainly, combined with sepulchral conceit. Gilbert and Sullivan, however, lighted a fire which seems to have scared most of those art fiends. But the very weakest of all the drivelling styles is the 'pap-boat' school—the work of those who will persist in painting Nature as if she had been deluged in skim-milk. Nature seen by a lachrymose intelligence and through a flaccid ocular lens! Nature with no flesh or bones: a nothingness of imbecility. Another phase of sentimentality in art is what is called the 'soot-bag' school, where on canvases of cold and coaly black appear pallid and death-like faces and hands floating in the gloomy mixture. Some minds, we know, are always with us, whose morbidity runs to the funereal and takes interest in nothing else; but, fortunately, the healthy souls are always in the majority, and shudder and look askance at such productions. Morbidity must, it seems, exist even where strength and manhood dwell, but it forms no part of our true English nature. Those painters, however, need not our pity, for their strutting vanity will keep them blessed even to the end."

In his lecture on "The English Water-Colour School," already reviewed and quoted in an appropriate place, Mr. Orrock delivered his weighty contribution to "the late controversy on light and water-colours." That was in 1887. Three years later, again under the head of "English Art," he lectured at the Society of Arts, John

James Orrock

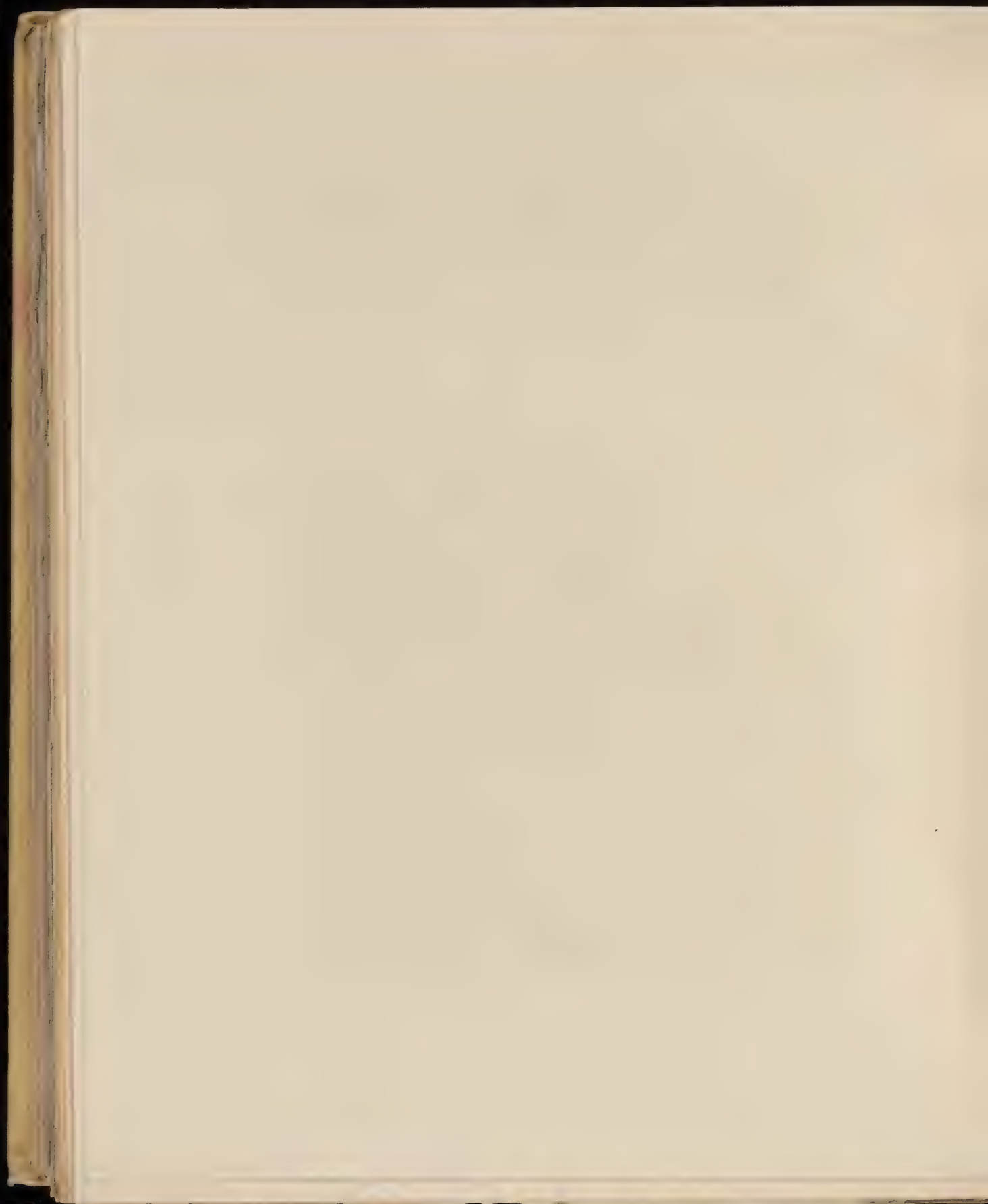
Street, Adelphi. The central feature of this discourse (for the delivery of which Mr. Orrock received the Society's silver medal), upon which he bestowed his utmost powers as an advocate, and in support of which he submitted a convincing array of the argument of facts, was "the claims of the British School of Painting to a thorough representation in the National Gallery." Pictures by illustrious English masters, whose works are not in the National Gallery, were exhibited by Mr. Orrock from his own collection. There was inevitably some repetition of formerly expressed views in the discourse. The backbone of it had structured the greater part of Mr. Orrock's pleas for the conservation of fine work by English painters in the public galleries of England. He sought to imbue the administrators of our national funds with the spirit that has actuated the Dutch in respect of their great masters. It had (with his protagonism of the English water-colour art) been, it was at the time, and is now, notwithstanding what has arisen in the shape of a new London gallery provided and partly stocked by a private gentleman, the predominant aspiration of his life. The subject was driven home with uncommon force in a Society of Arts lecture, and, so urged, provoked a remarkable response from the press. Articles more or less reflective of Mr. Orrock's opinions,¹ and in conspicuous instances accentuating and independently emphasising these, appeared in the *Times*, the *Saturday Review*, the *Morning Post*, the *Standard*,² the *Daily*

¹ Sir Charles Eastlake's purchases altogether, during the ten and a half years that he held the directorship of the National Gallery, amount to 155 pictures by 111 masters, and representing eight schools of painting. Of these masters, 82 were Italians, 11 were Flemish, 5 Dutch, 5 German, 5 *British*, 1 French, 1 Spanish, and 1 Byzantine. These 155 pictures cost altogether £102,631, 19s., which gives as the average price of each, £662, 2s. 6d.

² In a letter under the head of "Art Work for the New Parliament," in the *Standard*, Sept. 4, 1885, Mr. Frederick Wedmore, the eminent art-critic, said: "The representation of English oil painting in Trafalgar Square is just as unavoidably unequal as is that of water-colour drawing at South Kensington. Reliance has to be placed, in the main, on the accidents of gift or bequest, and thus a museum rich in Wilkies is apt to be poor in Cromes, and apt to be barren of Cotmans, and two indifferent Constables lie by the side of a whole gallery of Turners. Would the best students of Turner have a single picture of that magician's removed? Certainly not. On the contrary, they would have added to his oil paintings some of his masterpieces in water-colour—works of a quality such as is to be found, I think, only in the drawings which are now either in private hands or in the possession of those Universities which have profited by the exquisite generosity of Mr. Ruskin.



Little "Mr" Gamp.



James Orrock

Chronicle, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily News*, the principal country newspapers, and the leading art and literary journals.

Later, in fact in 1899, on what seemed to him a suitable occasion, Mr. Orrock expressed his matured views on the gallery which owed its establishment to the munificence of Mr. (afterwards Sir Henry) Tate. He said: "After the majesty of the Trafalgar Square National Gallery, that which is known as the National Gallery of British Art at Milbank is distinctly disappointing. In the first place, it by no means answers to its title, because the collection, to say the least, is a mixed one, and is mainly composed of pictures of quite recent date. A National Gallery of British Art must mean a representation of our art extending farther back than Hogarth's time. In my view, the grand mistake has been made of dividing our art into two collections, one located in Trafalgar Square and the other at Milbank. The beautiful pictures by Millais, Watts, Orchardson, Hook, and others, ought to have been *added* to the superb British collection which we already possessed. Had Mr. Tate exercised his munificence in adding a wing to our National Gallery on the site of St. George's Barracks—a project that was freely discussed and strongly recommended by the best judges at the time—we would have been enabled, under one roof, to make an unbroken study of our art from the earliest period to the present day. Moreover, students or lovers of art with little time to spare would, with a completed National Gallery on the central site, have been saved the trouble of paying a visit to remote Milbank to see a detached portion of our British pictures. The new wing which should have been built on the site of St. George's Barracks might, in perfect satisfaction of the sentiment which operated in the case of Robert Vernon and other givers of collections of pictures to the nation, have been called

But they would have Barret represented too, and Girtin, whom Turner so much admired. In fine, they would have a serious and comprehensive provision made for the representation of the whole English School. At present, as regards too many of its masters, it is left to the annual Winter Exhibition at Burlington House to reveal their true qualities. One year it is the genius of the Scotchman Raeburn that that exhibition reveals; another year it is the genius of Cotman; this year it was the extraordinary ability of James Ward the animal painter."

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the Tate wing. The provision of the wing would have brought with it space for completing the representation of foreign schools, examples of which we already possess. In a word, our National Gallery in Trafalgar Square would then have fully represented the British Art of Painting at least; it would have been an honour to the nation, and an abiding encouragement to generous donors to gradually build up a National Art monument worthy of its place and origin. The building itself, which Mr. Tate so generously gave, is not felt to be architecturally adequate to the place and for the purpose assigned. It is considered by sound judges deficient in grandeur of design, while the details lack simplicity and artistic beauty."

In a swiftly touched and vigorously expressed paper on "A Gallery of British Art,"¹ read at the Birmingham Congress of the National Association for the Advancement of Art and its Application to Industry, Mr. Orrock repeated his plea. Meantime, and subsequently, we find him at the Whitworth Institute, Manchester, at the Wolverhampton School of Art, at Oldham, and at Sheffield. In his address to the Sheffield art students before distributing the prizes, Mr. Orrock took occasion (the English Art for his theme) to descant on the fine artistic qualities of the silvered copper metal-work which is known as Sheffield Plate, and mentioned that fine examples in design and craftsmanship had commanded prices in the market equal to those realised by articles manufactured of sterling silver. A short time before delivering this particular address Mr. Orrock had been asked to join in the public protest that was being made against "the restoration," as it was called, of the most precious part of Peterborough Cathedral. As the question was yet

¹ "The sole trouble in this country is that we have got too many museums and no national system of art direction as they have on the Continent; there is too much competition to acquire things for the nation by various people, and the consequence is that, every now and then, the intelligent foreigner does slip in and gobble up a prize that we are squabbling over. Too much money is spent locally and provincially—not enough nationally. There are too many authorities. There is no centralisation. Therefore, in my humble opinion, all the museums and galleries should be put, as in France, under the control of a Minister of the Fine Arts, assisted by a national director, who should be a great expert and have a free hand. Less money would be squandered, and better results obtained."—A. U. in *The Star*.

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vexed, and its discussion properly national, the lecturer felt impelled to utterance in the following passage:—

“We have lately had a controversy about the restoration and conservation of the west front of Peterborough Cathedral. I have my own opinion about this serious problem. It is true, I am not an architect, but in early life I was intimately associated with some of the leading architects of Edinburgh. My late brother was an artistic Gothic architect, in conjunction with his celebrated master, John Henderson, who headed the Gothic revival in Scotland, and I am proud to say that they produced as an example of their taste and knowledge one of the finest modern Gothic buildings of the purest style, Glenalmond College in Perthshire. I am one of a stubborn band, it may be, who insist that the west front of Peterborough Cathedral could have been thoroughly preserved. The Dean and Chapter, we know, took the advice of two eminent architects, and in conjunction with a local builder they determined on a method of reparation. Many efficient judges and practical men agree with me that the front, as it stands now, could have been preserved, and if I am to judge by analogy, I should say this could have been accomplished. If you will allow me, I will give you two analogous cases. Some years ago I had a picture by Turner offered to me. It was one of Turner's late works, and was executed on a distemper or gesso ground; it was painted, in fact, on an old portrait, and on the back of the canvas was the duty mark. Turner from economical motives now and then purchased old canvases which had been painted on. As was his wont he prepared his canvases with this distemper or gesso ground, upon which he worked. It so happened, unfortunately, that portions of the paint became loosened from the distemper ground, and here and there small flakes had fallen off. I did not, however, apply to any of the great living painters, most of whom I knew, to give their opinion as to the conservation of this particular Turner. My knowledge and experience directed me at once to a Mr. Morrill of Duck Lane, Wardour Street, London. I asked this skilled workman what he thought of

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the picture, as to its state and as to the chance of its being conserved. He examined it intently, and hesitated to reply. I then said to him, 'What would you do with it, Mr. Morrill, if the picture were yours?' He replied, 'I would go forward with it.' I then said, 'Pray do so.' He alarmed me in the first place by fastening with mucilage the picture face downwards upon a sheet of plate glass, and afterwards treated the canvas on which the picture was painted with some softening process, so that he might strip the canvas off. This he actually effected, and then left the picture with the gesso ground adhering to the glass. The canvas presented rather a ghastly appearance, since, where the flakes of paint had fallen off, ruin seemed inevitable. But I am proud to say that that picture is in my possession to-day, and is thoroughly conserved. I showed it perfectly revived—its original self—to Mr. Ruskin, and he was deeply interested in the description of Morrill's method, and not less so at the proof which the operation afforded of Turner's occasional habit of painting over old portraits.

"I have also had several valuable pieces of painted satin-wood furniture of the great English period preserved and 'bushed-up' from the back in the same way. I did not go to consult Gillow or Lock or other distinguished cabinetmakers as to how this could be done, but I again had recourse to a practical man—an expert craftsman in Dean Street, Soho, London. I, therefore, stubbornly feel that this exquisite monument of Early English Architecture in Peterborough Cathedral should at least have had a more thorough examination, and, to begin with, the deputation from the Society of Antiquaries should have been allowed by the Dean and Chapter to carefully study the state of the building."

CHAPTER XXVI

Mr. Orrock and the Institute of Painters in Water-Colours—His discovery and the acquisition of the new site in Piccadilly—Scheme for an independent establishment—Its defeat—Royal favours—Knighthood of the president—Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse on "A Connoisseur and his Surroundings" in the *Art Journal*—Mr. Orrock's "small change" and "working capital"—A "Celebrity at Home" in the *World*—Collecting and "dealing"—The object Mr. Orrock had in view—An object-lesson : Exposition of the triumphs of the Great English Art at 48 Bedford Square.

MR. ORROCK'S position as one of the leading makers of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-Colours is and has been from the beginning of his connection with that body a matter of public knowledge. The story is long, and related fully would occupy many pages of the present work. There are, however, certain vexed questions, such as one meets with in the annals of most societies, certain conflicts of view and sentiment, mingled with Mr. Orrock's twenty-eight years' active membership, to which, for cogent and manifold reasons personal to himself, he declines to refer. Mr. Orrock was elected a member of the Institute, which was then called the New Water-Colour Society, and held its exhibitions in Pall Mall, in the year 1870. He took and displayed a deep and lively interest in the Society from the period of his election. When the movement was initiated to change the name of the Society, and, concurrently, to remove to new and more spacious galleries, Mr. Orrock was one of the most strenuous supporters of the enterprise. He was fortunate enough to find the site in Piccadilly, and, in furtherance of his design, equally happy in promptly interviewing an art collector and connoisseur whom he knew who chanced to occupy rooms in the then existing building. Through this gentleman the negotiations began, and in due course the purchase of the lease, after fewer of the law's delays than usual,

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was effected. The undertaking was at once prodigious and responsible, but the council—which included Mr. J. D. Linton, Mr. E. M. Wimperis, and others—applied themselves to their task with zeal and success.

For fifteen years nothing could have been more harmonious than the labours of the council, although it was a most trying and anxious time, and involved an unceasing application of energy on the part of the members of the directing body. To employ a homely phrase, the Institute “paid its way.” What, however, concerned “the ministry” was the desirability of placing the Institute on a basis of independence, equal essentially to that occupied by the Royal Academy of Arts itself. Mr. Orrock submitted a plan to accomplish this object, and he cannot forbear regretting that it was not adopted, for had that been done the Society would have had no occasion to resort for the maintenance of its existence to a limited company. However, after several conferences (that had had their initiative in the very beginning of the undertaking) with one of the leading collectors of water-colour paintings, a gentleman of wealth who stood high in the commercial world, it was agreed that Mr. Orrock should submit a scheme whereby donations and subscriptions should be solicited from those persons of means who took a deep interest in the National Water-Colour Art, and who themselves possessed collections of water-colour drawings, the commercial element, strictly speaking, to be held in abeyance. It was concurrently proposed that, should there remain a surplus when all expenses were paid, that amount should be handed over to the donors and subscribers in the shape of a bonus. Mr. Orrock was not long in proving the solidity of his scheme. In the course of a few weeks he obtained promises from wealthy collectors to the amount of £6000. In addition to this sum, he was personally prepared to guarantee another £6000 “and more also.” But, he was sure of the second £6000 to begin with. In submitting his plan, with its undoubtedly solid basis, Mr. Orrock expressed the

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reasonable hope that other members would, as he had done, place it before their patrons, and thereby aid in raising capital which, with the help of a mortgage, would enable them to purchase the property in Piccadilly for the Institute right out. The plan was nipped in the bud. One influential member thought that a commercial company, paying dividends, would afford a better basis for the society to rest on, and his plan was preferred. Mr. Orrock's friend, the wealthy collector, with others, when they heard of the adopted scheme (in withdrawing their promised donations), declined to take a single share, because they disagreed with the idea of dividend-paying companies being associated with Art societies. The Piccadilly Arts Gallery Company, Limited, was formed, and it has existed ever since.

The New Water-Colour Society, like the "Old Society," had always been a close borough, but on taking possession of the new galleries in Piccadilly, it was decreed that the exhibitions there should be thrown open to all painters in water-colours, on the principle in operation at the exhibitions of the Royal Academy. Schools were also formed under the direction of the Institute. When this broad extension of rights and privileges to exhibitors and students was adopted, her Majesty the Queen was pleased to grant the members of the Institute a diploma bearing her sign-manual. Another royal honour awaited the Institute. In due course her Majesty the Queen was graciously pleased to bestow the honour of knighthood on Mr. J. D. Linton, who was at that time president of the body.

Although the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-Colours has not boasted so many members of distinction, especially in landscape art, as those within the pale of the "Old Society," it has, nevertheless, included amongst its number figure, landscape, and architectural painters of the highest order. Perhaps the most important scheme of all in relation to the Institute was one conceived and formulated for securing the amalgamation of the two bodies, namely the Royal Society and the Royal Institute of

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Painters in Water-Colours. The points of difference between the high contracting parties—as far as they contracted—were such as might have been expected to arise; neither more nor less. At this distance of time it appears strange, on dispassionately appraising the elements of difference, that an arrangement was not effected. To revive any reference to these would serve no useful purpose whatsoever. One can only deplore that an equitable alliance, which would have enabled the combined societies to take a national position second only to that enjoyed by the Royal Academy, was not accomplished.

An interesting comment on the present condition of artistic criticism in high places, more particularly of water-colour art and water-colour societies, was afforded at a festive gathering held for the promotion of artistic charities, and attended by representatives of every important artistic body in London. A gentleman, holding high official position in one of the artistic societies of the Metropolis, speaking of and on behalf of his own and kindred bodies, said of the Old Water-Colour Society, the “grandmother” as he was pleased to call it of English Art, “The Society learned all it knew ninety years ago, and has never learned anything since.” The Institute, which with similarly graceful humour he styled the “Auntie,” “followed faithfully in the steps of the older Society, knowing and learning nothing more.”

Ninety years ago means the year of grace 1810. The Society that knows nothing and has learned nothing since that date numbers among its present members such men as Sir Edward Poynter, P.R.A., and Sir L. Alma Tadema. The Institute has for its actual president Mr. E. J. Gregory, R.A.; for its ex-president, Sir James Linton. Among former members who have now joined the majority and who entered one or other society since 1810, need we name others than De Wint, Cox, Prout, Barret, Hunt, Varley, Copley, Fielding, George Cattermole, John Lewis, R.A., Fred. Walker, R.A., Birket Foster, Hine, Collier, Charles Green? What is to be said of the state of mind of one who is by profession an

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artist, and who has ventured in print to speak of the "testimony of art," when at a meeting of artists, and in the presence of some of the greatest and most original exponents of the possibilities of water-colour art, especially in figure, he had the courage, not to call it by a severer name, to sweep aside this long array of great artistic achievement as something absolutely unimportant if not illusory? The statement quoted might by the charitable be set down as a jest: if so, it was as poor in taste, considering the place and the occasion, as it was unfounded in truth and fact.

It was perhaps by way of adding point to his jocularly that the critic was good enough to say of another and still younger society, "What shall I say of the New English Art Society? I am at a loss to know whence they derive their Art? They have found it neither in heaven above, nor in the earth beneath, nor in the waters under the earth." As there were several eminent members of that Society present, it is to be hoped they enjoyed the speaker's clowning.

In 1892, the pen of the late Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse, and the pencil of Mr. J. Fulleylove, R.I.,¹ were engaged in a representation of Mr. Orrock, at 48 Bedford Square. The poet and art-critic who has dealt appreciatively with the masters of the English Water-Colour School, and Mr. Orrock's brother artist, aptly fulfilled a congenial task. In reference to the date of the interior decoration of the Adam House in question, Mr. Monkhouse says, "It was the period of Wedgwood and Flaxman, of Blake and Bartolozzi, of Sir Joshua Reynolds and Romney; and what is even more to the point, it was the cradle of that British school of water-colour of which Mr. James Orrock, of all men living, has perhaps the most thorough understanding." What struck Mr. Monkhouse, as it strikes everybody with his kind of cultured perception, was the extreme fineness of the objects of Art that composed what, in the highest sense, might be called the furniture of Mr. Orrock's abode,

¹ "A Connoisseur and his Surroundings," *Art Journal* (Virtue & Co.).

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and the perfect harmony in form and colour that prevailed, "wherever the eye could settle." As he said, "The sideboard is as good of its kind as the gem-like little Morlands; the mantel-piece as fine as the picture by James Holland that hangs over it." Concerning the connoisseur himself: "One need only see Mr. Orrock handle one of his Sheraton chairs, and hear him speak of the fine curvature of its shield back, to know that he has a fine feeling for form; and the delight he takes in the inlay of some of his satin-wood tables, where a free floriate design is traced in perfect sympathy with the shape it decorates, tells the same tale; but in pictures he rightly prizes colour above all other properties, and harmony above all other properties of colour. He prefers it, indeed, to be pure and sweet and luminous; little, if anything, enters his house that has not these qualities; but before all things it must be 'in tune'—indeed, not only the pictures, but everything at No. 48 is in tune—at peace in itself, and therefore not disposed to quarrel with its neighbours." After proceeding at some length in his account of the principal contents of the domestic palace of Art—for it is as different from a museum or a series of galleries as a habitation in which the resident abides with his gods can be—Mr. Monkhouse justly says, "More Constables and Wilsons on the staircase, more of these and other masters than one would think even Mr. Orrock would care to possess; but then, nobody supposes that Mr. Orrock keeps all the pictures he buys; they are his small change, his working capital, which he employs to such rare advantage, that he is able to acquire those exceptionally fine specimens of his favourite masters, which are the permanent glories of No. 48." To quote the concluding passage of Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse's appreciation of Mr. Orrock would be to give in his words the essence of the testimony supplied by the exposition comprehended, with sustaining evidence in its support, within the present volumes. As interesting corroboration from an authoritative pen in Art, it deserves, however, to be mentioned.

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The man and his mission have necessarily been dealt with so thoroughly in these pages, that but few extracts and brief from what has been said on the same subject elsewhere are admissible. The writer of "Mr. James Orrock, R.I., in Bedford Square," one of the *World's* "Celebrities at Home" series, said of habitation and host: "No. 48 is no more a show-house, judging from the exterior, than Turner's was in Queen Anne Street, but visitors as diverse as the Empress Frederick of Germany and Mr. Ruskin (the latter a frequent visitor) have been here; while M. Henri Rochefort, in his new-born enthusiasm for great English landscape, has been heartily welcomed. We feel Mr. Orrock's greeting to be that of a man intensely earnest in his art, faith, and convictions; his 'Come in,' the invitation of a hearty host. There is a whiff of the heather in his vividly descriptive conversation; you find in his manner—which makes you instantly at home—a blend of English cordiality and Scottish humour. Shrewd? You have not to be long in his company to feel that his shrewdness borders on divination. And he is clearly a man with a mission, and imbued with a dauntless determination to carry it through. There would be something Napoleonic about the head of Mr. Orrock if the mobile modelling of the face from the ample brow downwards were not so indicative of appreciation of the material side of living and of his imperturbable good humour. He is a brisk 'comfortable' man of middle height. The frequent smile is not as 'slow,' perhaps, if it be as 'wise,' as that on the face of Tennyson's miller; but, evidence withal of a sunny contented nature, it 'is half within and half without, and full of *dealings* with the world.'" Mr. Orrock's policy and practice to "hammer away" appeared prominently in his interview with the representative of the *World*, who found that "He has had two great objects in life: first, to help to give to the English Water-Colour School—'the Cinderella' of our art, as he has called it in his vigorous lectures and pamphlets, because she has ever been overshadowed by her proud sister in oil—promotion and pride of place; and, secondly, to establish the British School of Fine Art in all its branches upon the pedestal which its unapproach-

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able originality and merits entitle it to occupy. With tongue and pen Mr. Orrock has for years past been a merciless assailant of what he holds to be a lamentably un-English bestowal of the funds at the disposal of the Trustees of the National Gallery. He contends that examples of early and archaic foreign schools have swamped the British Art in the national collection; 'golden-gloried, squint-eyed saints' are to be seen there in tiresome excess, while for examples of the greatest school of landscape in the world—the English—one has to explore private collections. Mr. Orrock is free and forcible, yet ever good-tempered, in his denunciation of the un-national treatment of British works at the National Gallery." At the period of the *World* interview, the autumn of 1894, the question of the hour with Mr. Orrock was the deterioration of the pictures in the National Gallery, a matter, with his part in it, that has been referred to in former pages.

"But then, nobody supposes that Mr. Orrock keeps all the pictures he buys; they are his small change, his working capital," writes Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse; "and full of *dealings* with the world," with a humorously apt twist quotes the writer of "the Celebrity." To hear some of the artists denounce "dealing," one might suppose it to be a criminal practice, or, if not that, a pursuit that should not be followed by any members of their craft, but only by peers of the realm, wealthy commoners, persons in "the trade," and—the rest. Sell your own pictures and drawings—if you can, but it is at the peril of your reputation as a painter if you dispose, at a profit, of the paintings of other artists! It is generally believed, that you, being an artist and a vendor of your own brushwork, may without impairing your dignity indulge in occasional "swap." Linnell, for example, traded off his pictures for bricks and mortar. But, a dealer! The very idea is repugnant to the artist of refined perception and lofty mind—who, when he can, is only too happy to have dealings with the dealer. Hear Mr. Orrock himself on this subject so far as it is personal to himself: "My ambition from boyhood has been to bring the English art to the front, a place it deserves to occupy.

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I well knew that the first if not the only convincing proof to be advanced on my own part should take the shape of works and objects of fine art of my own collecting. To accomplish this design a large sum of money was necessary. In this, as in most other undertakings, capital was requisite. I had to be the architect and builder of my own fortune. I had, to a certain extent, to make the bricks without straw. Carefully, slowly, and by denying myself every other luxury save that which abides in the gratified passion for gathering together fine things, I made a collection of drawings, paintings, and other objects that, brought together in a focus, proved eloquent enough to convince the public that the Great English Art was deserving of the exalted place I had foreshadowed. I felt privileged in my endeavour: I was proud of its accomplishment. And, I fearlessly contend that my pride was single-minded, unsordid, and honest. My efforts as a collector were crowned with distinguished success. My collection is known and appreciated by the best judges and connoisseurs all over the world. With the aid of this collection of mine, and by the exercise of voice and pen, my life-long object has been gained. The English School is now in the van! Without a tinge of egotism and with absolute truth I may add that if money-grubbing for the sake of amassing wealth had been my aim I could in the Midlands have accumulated a large fortune. But, not in Art. My lot was not unlike that of the late Mr. Anthony Mundella, who was my old friend and neighbour at Nottingham. He once told me, speaking of himself, 'I had to grow my own trees before I could begin to make my own ladder.' I also had to do both. Upon that Art ladder I have mounted, step by step, until I have reached the top. The Great English Art is there displayed in an assemblage of object-lessons whose teaching is conclusive. It has been part of my enterprise to bring them together, for I felt that, to accomplish that upon which I had set my mind, nothing else would do."

CHAPTER XXVII

Club life in London—Odde Volumes, the Savage, the Urban, and the Wigwam—"Leicestershire" on Twelfth Night—Ludlow: the story of the violoncello—A club story—A false Turner: Orrock on Orrock—The late Mr. Boothroyd of Leeds—A splendid patron—His fine collection of Henry Dawson's works—In Charnwood Forest—"Are you a Punch-and-Judy merchant?"—"Not had a bit of paint on my house for ten years!"—Dr. Appleby Stevenson's and Professor Marshall's appreciation of Mr. Orrock.

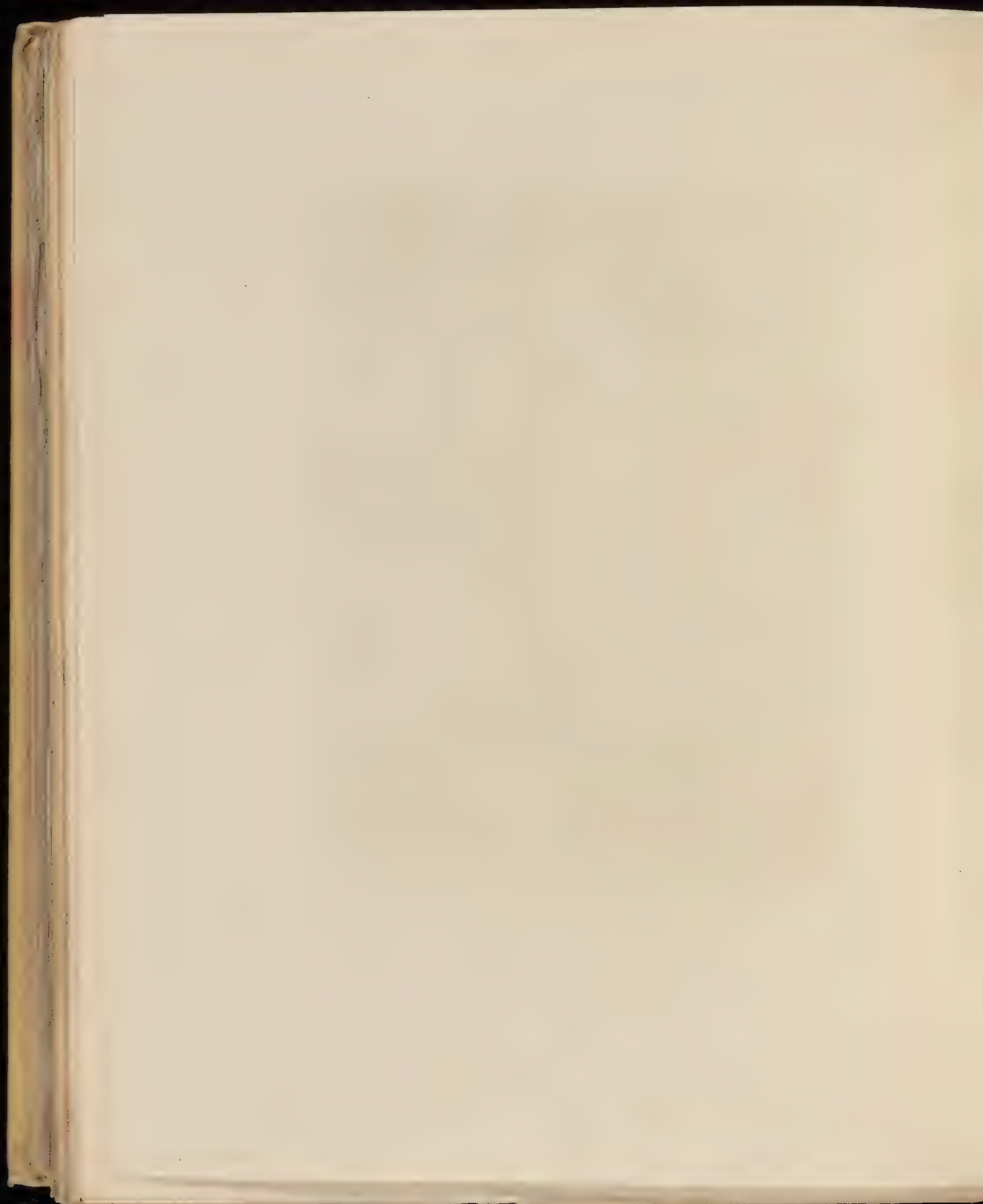
A CLUB man such as Dr. Johnson would have favoured, Mr. Orrock is at home with the "Odde Volumes," at the Savage Club, the Urban, and the Wigwam, and, notwithstanding never-ending still-beginning claims on his time and attention, he manages to get a good deal of enjoyment out of Club Life in London. He has been a member of the Savage Club for upwards of a quarter of a century. There have been and are frequently recurring in the communion at the Savage and the Urban amenities of a kind that members who best know their Orrock would be sorry to miss. The most charming part of a Club life, which some of us think should be one's other home, Mr. Orrock has gladly experienced, and his most intimate friends with him. Annually on Twelfth Night Mr. Orrock stamps "Leicestershire" on a gathering of the Savages, and when he is not present to play the part of host, as, owing to illness, has been the case, the incident is not considered closed until every one of the brethren assembled has added his sign-manual to the president's sympathetic regret. Mr. Orrock is a devoted Savage, and valiant in his maintenance of the best traditions of the Club. Genial Mr. W. E. Church, the ideal secretary of the Urban, inheritor of the mantle of Peter Cunningham and a marvellous conservator of Dickens lore, would consider the assembly incomplete if Mr. Orrock were not present on the Shake-



Portrait of Mrs. Giese.

Portrait of Mrs. Giese.

M^{rs} Giese.



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speare and the Charles Dickens nights, which remain the most interesting of unchangeable literary celebrations in a London that happily refuses to be effaced. There are two stories against him which Mr. Orrock tells occasionally at these gatherings with just as much relish as if he had proved victorious in the war of wits. Both relate to Orrock the musician and lover of the sister art, rather than to Orrock the painter and connoisseur. Let him spin one of the yarns in his own words: "While on a sketching expedition to Ludlow in Shropshire I paid a visit to the neighbouring village of Blomfield and took up my quarters at an old-fashioned inn that was kept by one Murray. After tea and trimmings I strolled into the bar and found assembled a company of villagers. My appearance in their midst attracted unusual attention; I could not guess why. Mysterious signs and significant looks were exchanged between the landlord and certain members of the company, and I heard mine host say, in obvious reference to myself, 'Oh, he is up to nought.' This unflattering reference interfered somewhat with my habitual composure. What was it I might have been suspected to be up to? Why was the assurance that I was 'up to nought' there regarded as a relief? However, the conversation which my entrance had interrupted resumed its original flow, and I then discovered that I was in a horsey neighbourhood where strangers in pursuit of stable secrets were objects of suspicion. No doubt, to begin with, I had been set down as a tout! However, since the dark horse—if there were one—in training on the common behind the inn was dark enough to remain impenetrable to one who knew little and cared less about the sport of horse-racing, the knowing ones conversed unrestrainedly on their subject and left me to commune with the others. One of the latter was a most intelligent man, a bootmaker, named Pater, who kindly offered to show me the fine half-timbered houses which are numerous in the neighbourhood. I called next morning at Mr. Pater's cottage, which was close by, and found myself in a comfortable habitation of spotless cleanliness, and pretty and fragrant with

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abundant flowers. In a corner stood a violoncello case, hasped and ornamented with a crest. When Mr. Pater entered the apartment I said, 'You seem to be skilled in music as well as in architecture.' He replied, 'Well, I play the vyolincella a bit. Do *you* play the vyolincella, Mr. Orrock?' I said that I had in my time played a great deal on that instrument. 'Do you understand them, Mr. Orrock—are you a judge of a vyolincella?' was the next question. I modestly disclaimed the right to be considered a judge. He thereupon, in compliance with my wish 'to see this bass,' opened the fine old case, and I observed in the lid several bows, one of which he handed to me. Perceiving it was marked a 'Dodd bow,' I, as any other old player would have done, felt an instant accession of interest in the fiddle. Mr. Pater, with a reverent care that was not lost on the recipient, handed me the instrument and requested me to give it a trial. I complied. I thought I had never passed a bow over such a bass before. A careful examination of the scroll, the wood with its richly 'toney' amber varnish, the shape, the purfling, in short the entire instrument convinced me that I was handling a masterpiece. 'Did I like it?' asked Mr. Pater. I said, 'I did.' 'Would I buy it?' This gave me pause. I naturally suspected that if I said yes the owner would name a, to me, prohibitive price.

"I said, 'I have an Italian bass which is excellent enough for my pretensions.' 'Will you give £5 for it, Mr. Orrock?' I confess that the prospect of striking a bargain was alluring, but I did not let on. 'Was the case included?' Mr. Pater replied, 'Oh yes; case and everything.' I finally consented, because—as I rather disingenuously observed—the instrument would be a good companion to my Italian 'cello at home. 'Well, Mr. Orrock,' remarked the owner of the fiddle, 'I shall probably see you this evening in the bar-parlour, and we can come to a final arrangement, after consulting my wife.' Together we proceeded on a congenial inspection of the half-timbered houses, and in the evening I again met Mr. Pater. The company was larger than it had been the night before, and I soon perceived

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that the account of my negotiation with Mr. Pater for the purchase of the 'cello was public property. Murray, the landlord, plunging without a word of preface into the matter that was uppermost in my thoughts, said, 'Mr. Orrock, had I known that Mr. Pater was offering his vyolincella for sale I would have given him double the money you are going to give.' 'Mr. Murray,' I rejoined, 'you must excuse me, but I cannot see where you come in. This matter is between Mr. Pater and myself.' 'Yes, yes,' said he, 'but we all know the vyolincella, and like the vyolincella, and would be sorry to lose the vyolincella. Anyway, Pater ought to get its value.' I adopted a conciliatory method. I sought to smooth matters. Being a new-comer, I craved the honour, and did not crave in vain, to play the part of host on the occasion. As an American similarly situated might say, I stood drinks for the crowd. A repeated request met with the like generous compliance. It was agreed between Mr. Pater and myself at the hour of closing that I was to call on him again and give the violoncello another trial. I called and tried it to my utmost ability. Failing to find the 'wolf' on the third string, and otherwise falling more than ever in love with the instrument, I felt determined, if possible, to close with Mr. Pater. He, however, had meantime consulted his wife. And, now, would I give £10 for the fiddle? I protested that Murray, the landlord, had interfered. Mr. Pater assured me that that was not the case, and that he would again see me in the evening. The crowd was greater in the bar-parlour than before, but undeterred by the increased number of my guests, I repeated the same treatment. To my extreme annoyance, the landlord again interfered. Mr. Pater, after consulting with him, asked me if I would advance £15 for the bass. After reprehending the instability of the owner, I gave way. But it did not stop there. For about ten days or a fortnight I was lured on in the presence of a company that at length overflowed from the parlour into the passage, sharers of my hospitality whose thirst appeared to increase with their multiplication, until I had been induced to offer £60 for the fiddle. The evening before taking my departure for Ludlow I

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warmly urged Mr. Pater to come to some settlement. He said, after the libations had run their accustomed course, 'I asked you last night whether you would give £60 for the vyolincella, but I think to-night you might give £160 for it.' 'No!' I said, 'I will not be humbugged any longer. Mr. Pater, I wish you and the rest of the company good-night.' 'Stop, stop a minute, my dear sir—will you give £300 for it?' I said nothing. 'Will you give £500 for it? It is a Straduarius vyolincella, and belongs to Mr. Clive at the Hall. It is worth one thousand guineas. I have it to play for the church service. Should anybody ever question your appreciation of a Strad., and moreover, imagine, Mr. Orrock, that you have not a leaning towards a good bargain, refer them to John Pater, Blomfield, Ludlow, Shropshire, and he will put them right.'"

The other is a Club story, a tradition of the Savage Club, of which institution Mr. Orrock has been a member, as has been stated in another page, for more than a quarter of a century. One night, in the cosiest and most popular room in the Club, the subject of tenor vocalists—a fearsome theme!—was discussed. Mr. Courtice Pounds was named, and Mr. Orrock expressed his opinion of that popular artist's singing. He said he did not care for Mr. Pounds's voice, and although he admitted that the attractive hero of Savoy Operas was a skilled vocalist and a finished actor, he went so far as to avow that he thought his stage-singing "woolly" and "blankety" compared with his drawing-room exposition. "Have you frequently heard Mr. Pounds sing?" asked one of the Savages present. The reply was that he had heard him occasionally. "Do you know him when you see him?" was the second question put by the same querist. "Well," replied Mr. Orrock, "I have rarely seen him off the stage." The questioner himself was personally unknown to Mr. Orrock. It was a party of four, consisting of the two mentioned, with Messrs. W. H. Denny and E. J. Odell. Mr. Denny asked the unnamed one if he had ever heard Mr. Pounds sing, and if he had, what he thought of his singing? The reply was, "I know Mr. Pounds very well, and I am familiar with his singing, but I confess I do not think much

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of him." Mr. Denny then struck in with, "Perhaps you are a singer yourself?" "Well, not much," was the rejoinder. Mr. Denny thereupon whispered something in the speaker's ear, and then after a great deal of pressure on his part and that of Mr. Odell the unknown was induced to warble "Tom Bowling." Mr. Orrock was delighted. He said, "Well, sir, if Courtice Pounds could sing like *you* he would make a mark." The unknown presently withdrew, and Mr. Orrock asked Messrs. Odell and Denny "who that beautiful singer was?" They evaded the question and succeeded by the means of their clever acting in convincing him that they really did not know. On their withdrawal Mr. Orrock appealed to the club steward. Did he know who it was? "Yes, he did. It was Mr. Courtice Pounds." The tale, one may be sure, has lost nothing in the telling by such *raconteurs* as Messrs. Pounds, Denny, and Odell. Mr. Orrock would not grudge them a note of the laughter which the recital invariably provokes. On his own part he would offer an explanation rather than a defence, one in which *naïveté* is perhaps the most prominent quality. He cheerfully admits that he had for the most part heard Mr. Pounds on the stage, and that he did not recognise him in "mufti." Had he done so he would have been dumb. And he confesses that he did not recognise the stage in the chamber voice, owing to his inferior knowledge and experience of the latter. But all the same his laugh is ever ready in its recognition of the merry fact that when he heard and applauded Mr. Courtice Pounds's singing of "Tom Bowling," on its vocal merits, the laugh was against him.

From Mr. Orrock's extensive and varied experience as a connoisseur in relation to real and false "Turners," one anecdote at least may be quoted, seeing that it is not only void of offence, but has a humorous complexion. Sitting in judgment on a doubtful work is a thankless, not to say a perilous proceeding. Your friend, who has acquired a dubious Turner, or Constable, or Morland, asks you what you think of it. He attaches the utmost value to your opinion, and will prize it—if it agree with his own. But, woe betide

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you if you take an opposite view! Mr. Orrock paid a visit to Leicester some years ago, and, at a dinner party given by a friend, was informed by several connoisseurs present that there was a splendid Turner in the town, and that they would be glad if he would accompany them to see it. He expressed his doubts when he heard the picture described as something supreme; in short, as a magnificent work by the master in his best period. However, next day a collective visit was paid to a house in the London Road, where the precious painting was on view. Mr. Orrock was asked his opinion, and, in reply, he being on such occasions the embodiment of Scotch caution, inquired the price? Seventeen hundred guineas was the figure. Mr. Orrock then said that he himself would purchase the picture at that price conditionally on its being pronounced genuine by three well-known London experts. The owner asked if Mr. Orrock would be satisfied with the opinion of one expert who might even then be in Leicester, as he was expected any day within the week: his name was Orrock. Mr. Orrock said he was willing to accept the single opinion of the gentleman named as final. The owner thereupon repeated his former question, accentuated and driven home: "What do *you* think of it?" "Well, sir," said Mr. Orrock, "since you ask me so pointedly, I must say that I fear it is not genuine." "Not genuine!" exclaimed the possessor of the painting—"not genuine! You wait until Orrock arrives. He knows more about this kind of subject than all Leicester put together. You surely do not for a moment put your judgment against his?" "I certainly do," was the rejoinder. "Then, who are you?" Answer: "*I* am James Orrock."

The patron who discovers the landscape painter in the fields at his easel, and thereupon cleaves unto him, enamoured with the beauty of his work, is rare. His are like angels' visits. Sometimes it is the owner of the demesne who desires its picturesque features depicted for the embellishment of the town-house; occasionally it is a magnificent lover of art who finds the painter he is persuaded he has been looking for, and who is eager to make a compact with him

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"to take all he paints" for an assigned period. Mr. Orrock has met with patrons of both types. The late Mr. Boothroyd, of Leeds, was one of the latter. Their first meeting did not take place precisely at the easel, but "next door" to it, at the abode of a common friend whose walls were adorned with some of Mr. Orrock's drawings. Struck with the latter, Mr. Boothroyd inquired the name of the painter, when he was directed by mine host to "the gentleman on his right." The introduction preceded an association and friendship which lasted unimpaired until the lamented death of Mr. Boothroyd, which took place in the autumn of 1899. Mr. Orrock accounts Mr. Boothroyd, amongst many of that class, the most loyally appreciative patron he ever had. For four consecutive years Mr. Boothroyd took every drawing which Mr. Orrock made. At the end of that period another agreement was made for a further period of two years. The document which bound the contracting parties was couched in the simplest and briefest terms, and was singularly free from those conditions and provisions for contingencies which might naturally have been included in a ratification of the bargain. As many or as few drawings as the artist chose to produce were to become the property of Mr. Boothroyd at a stated annual sum—that was all. Mr. Boothroyd frequently accompanied Mr. Orrock on his sketching tours, taking his summer recreation in that congenial way, and was often a welcome guest at 48 Bedford Square. He possessed, at the time of his death, a remarkably fine and full collection of the paintings of Henry Dawson, of whose art he was a profound admirer. There are masterpieces in the Boothroyd gallery that, one conceives, will find their way eventually into one or other of the permanent galleries of Great Britain, where they undoubtedly ought to be; unless American connoisseurs are beforehand, as they have been in relation to so many fine English pictures, in securing them. An early "Dawson man," Mr. Boothroyd lived to see that painter's fame advance and the lofty place taken which, with other sound judges, had been allotted to him by Mr. Orrock.

If Mr. Orrock is not a solitary sketcher from nature, it has

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never been his rule to form one of a group of painters engaged in the kindred pursuit. He has been out with Sir James Linton, with the late Keeley Halswelle, with E. M. Wimperis, and with other brothers of the brush. Accompanied by Sir James Linton, he made a tour through Spain and sketched, chiefly at Granada; but he has never felt impelled to turn the work which he did there, or elsewhere on the Continent, to fuller pictorial account.

The anecdotes of his varied experience as a sketcher from nature that are strewn through these chapters by no means exhaust his overflowing stock. They would of themselves furnish forth a volume scarcely less entertaining than Sir Edward Russell's delightful collection. A representative selection has been made. The story which follows, as appropriately in this place as anywhere, is curious inasmuch as it resembles the experiences of H. S. Marks and Millais. Marks gave his anecdote to Charles Keene, who made it the subject of a drawing in *Punch*, with a modified treatment which the Royal Academician did not consider an improvement. It was a church that Millais said he was going to paint.

Engaged sketching in the Charnwood Forest country in North Leicestershire, Mr. Orrock dropped in at the Forest Rock Inn, near St. Bernard's Monastery. The landlord, who was not unused to entertaining sketchers, and who took a proper pride in making his house popular with the artistic brotherhood, asked Mr. Orrock where he was going to paint. The reply was, "The rough ferny and rocky ground overlooking the Monastery." The landlord said if Mr. Orrock had no objection he would accompany him to the desired spot in his trap, and return with the horse to bait. While Mr. Orrock's man was setting up the tent-like umbrella, a stranger, whose aspect betokened his agricultural calling, approached, and promptly entered into conversation with the artist.

Stranger. Good-morning, Mister.

Artist. Good-morning to you, sir.

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Stranger (looking at the umbrella, by this time raised and corded). What is your business here? (*Then having, as he thought, divined it*)—Are you not too far from the village?

Artist (unable to follow the drift of the question). No, I think not, but—

Stranger. You will get no custom up here. You are a Punch-and-Judy merchant, aren't you?

Artist (smiling and preparing to set to work). No. That is not my line of business. I am going to do my best to paint that lovely landscape before us, with the monastery in what we artist chaps call the middle-distance, and the distant country beyond.

Stranger (interested and proud of being a tiller of the immediate soil). I am a farmer, and I live in the house you see over yonder.

Artist. Yes. To be sure. I know the house. I painted it when I was here before, about six years ago.

Stranger (with severity). Do you come from London?

Artist. Yes, I come from London.

Stranger (with a deeply contemptuous snort). I thought as much. Hereabouts we know the Londoners to be the biggest liars in creation. Look you here, Mister sir, I have lived in that 'ere house ten years come next Michaelmas, and it has not had a bit of paint put on it since I was a tenant. What do you say to that?

The two communications that follow may be left, with a word or two of explanatory introduction, to tell their own story. They are respectively from Dr. Appleby Stevenson, M.D., Mildmay Park, N., and Dr. Marshall, of Edinburgh, both old friends and comrades of Mr. Orrock. Dr. Marshall has frequently accompanied Mr. Orrock on his sketching excursions on both sides of the Border. "Apples" is the name Dr. Stevenson is known by amongst his most familiar friends.

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MILDMAY PARK, N.

"MY DEAR MR. WEBBER,—Asked by you to throw 'a flash-light' on the life of our friend Orrock, I willingly do so, for mine is an instance of 'knowledge' according to 'zeal.'

"It is something, I consider, to know Orrock, who, amongst his intimate friends, is called, but not always, 'Jemmy,' of course, not when officially addressed, or in the presence of full-dress fig and wig, but confined more, I may say, to the amenities of private life.

"These nicknames, or diminutives, are really proofs of fondness, not mere familiarity, just as Oliver Goldsmith's intimates used to call him 'Goldy,' and Sheridan was called 'Sherry.' If 'something to know' Orrock, then, what is it, or must it be, to claim a forty years' friendship 'mid all the shifting scenes of life.' My first impressions go back to the time when, I daren't say how long ago, I knew J. O. in the double capacity of a doctor and a dentist. He was then a qualified surgeon of Edinburgh, and took up teeth as a speciality, and soon became a conspicuous success, thus early sparing *no pains* in his operations to render them *satisfactory*, and soon we naturally found him very much in the *mouths of the public*. This was in Nottingham, and he was before long a *persona grata*, and a prominent figure in the professional, artistic, and social society of that city. It was easily seen then that he was also a master of art (if not arts), and the etchings he himself did were at once the admiration and envy of those who saw them. His musical skill, too, was known, and felt deeply. It was, indeed, a charm, almost an inspiration, to see him, and hear him with his 'cello.

"Nor did he disdain the mere amusements of life. He could enjoy, and did make others enjoy, the charms of the card table, the badinage and anecdotage of the 'Inner Circle.'

"I shall never forget a very buoyant three days we had at 'The Dukeries' together, with other kindred spirits, when J. O.

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was the life of the party, and some of us contributed very materially to the profit and advantage of the others, and were truly toasted as 'Jolly Good Fellows.'

"J. O. always had a passion for art, and had a studio in his house in which he was often at work between the visits of patients, but chiefly early in the morning and evening; in winter by gaslight, and in summer by daylight. I have in my possession his first Academy picture (oils), a gift to me. Subject—'A Study: Beech Trees in Bradgate Park.' In summer J. O. constantly painted on the Trent and in the neighbourhood of Nottingham, but his dental practice compelled him to get to his painting early in the morning. He lodged in a cottage at Clifton Grove, and after three hours' work or more would go to Nottingham for business for the day.

"In 1856 he, I may say, discovered Henry Dawson (who, as an artist, if he is to be placed below Turner, may be, I think, put above Claude Lorraine), from some pictures exhibited at a *conversazione* at the School of Art. I met Dawson at J. O.'s house, and he afterwards came to see and chat with me several times at mine. Simple and natural as Dawson was, there was a quiet power about him, not unmixed with homely conceit. He even then almost knew his value, and let others know it too.

"J. O. was always a collector as well as an artist, and had from boyhood a sure sense of fine art, and also the eye of an expert. He had an unerring appreciation of David Cox's *oil* pictures and drawings long before they were acknowledged, and he felt the same about Barret in oil and water-colours. He had a keen sense of the peculiar excellence of William Hunt's figures, and indeed of all Hunt's works; at that time they were to be had at small prices.

"On Orrock's walls were Varleys, Cattermoles, Linnells, Dawsons, Constables, Coxes, Copley Fieldings, Barrets, &c., and J. O. had gained the credit of being wondrous cute—one eye on art and the other on gold. Now, all this up to a certain point

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was true, and it was right; but had it been inordinately so, he ought to have filled his garrets and area cellars, given the means, with such profitable objects. Primarily he bought the works because he loved them, and gained daily instruction from their teaching. And no one was more surprised when the oil Coxes and the Dawsons rose to the dizzy height of ten times the original prices than was Orrock himself. I well remember one of our symposium nights in Park Street, Nottingham, when I took up the poker, and pointing to an oil picture by Cox, which represented an old Welshwoman driving geese, asked the company what they fancied J. O. paid apiece for those geese; there were about a dozen. The picture was bought at a sale in Birmingham, and cost £40. That same picture passed through many hands, and ultimately sold for £600. This picture was bought early in the sixties.

"J. O. and I were fellow-members of a Nottingham literary society called 'The Friday Society,' because of our meeting on Fridays. The late Right Honourable A. J. Mundella, Sir W. Tindal Robertson, M.P. for Brighton, and Mr. Brudenell Carter were of the set; and *he* read at one of the meetings a paper on 'Ruskin's Writings.' This paper was more than well received, and by request was printed. This was the start in essay-writing and lecturing.

"J. O. had a most lucrative practice in Nottingham; but he wisely resolved to retire and enter the arena of art; this he did at the age of thirty-five on a modest fortune. London was his field, and in a sense he has since made it his empire.

"Orrock is in no respect a colourless man. How, indeed, could a true artist be so? Whether painting, praising, or *appraising* a picture, writing a critical and artistic article, giving an art address or after-dinner speech, being a good *raconteur* in English and Scotch, a capital mimic, a great humourist, a fine musician, a genial host, a warm friend and admirer, or dwelling rapturously on his 'Blue,' he is always thorough and keenly to

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the point, an apt illustration of 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do,' &c.

"This little tribute is from his old friend Appleby Stephenson, M.D., Mildmay Park, London, himself re-christened by Orrock 'APPLES.'"

Dr. Marshall, who heads his interesting communication "Impressions and Recollections of James Orrock," writes: "My friendship with Mr. Orrock dates from 1878, and the manner of its beginning is so characteristic of the man that the telling of it will be as good an introduction as any to my subject. I had been appointed Professor of Classics at the Yorkshire College in the previous year, and my wife and I had gathered our little belongings into a charming little house in a pleasant suburb of the not too pleasant town of Leeds in which the Yorkshire College is situated. Amongst other belongings were a few pieces of old oak, old china, and bric-à-brac of various kinds. These had apparently attracted the attention of our landlord, Mr., at that time Alderman, Boothroyd. One evening in the early spring of 1878 Mr. Boothroyd called, and in his rough but not uncordial Yorkshire manner intimated that he had brought a friend (said friend not named) who took an interest in these things, to see my old china. I of course welcomed Mr. Boothroyd and his unknown friend, and a chat of quite uncommon interest to me soon developed between the stranger and myself. It is just possible that I laid down the law on the subject of blue china; it would be quite in the humour of the situation if I did. At all events, I was fortunate enough to express a desire to make the acquaintance of a man whom I was prepared to look up to as an authority on the subject, said authority being a Mr. Orrock, of whom I had heard from a Nottingham friend. 'Well, this is Mr. Orrock,' burst in Mr. Boothroyd, and thus, with the humorous twinkle in his shrewd eye, that has inspired joy or terror, according to circumstances, in many a spectator since, Mr. Orrock

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introduced himself. We took the incident in high good humour. Mr. Orrock told me something of his 'thirteen garnitures of Nankin blue' and his drawings of the masters and so forth; and as he left he rejoiced my soul with an invitation to come and stay at '48.' 'We are brother Scots,' said he, 'and we may be more before we're done.' And more, indeed, we have been; for since that evening few months have passed during all these one-and-twenty years in which we have not seen something of each other, and not many of the haunts of artist and lover of English scenery have we failed to visit together. The grey moors of Yorkshire by Bolton and Barden and Bedale have seen our little encampment; and the still windings of the Soar and Derwent, and the wide wastes of Holy Isle, and the towers of Warkworth and Alnwick and Naworth, and the kindly lanes of Surrey, and the still pools of Essex streams. Norfolk broads have known us, and the white cliffs of the south and the slopes of Snowdon, and Bettws, reminiscent of David Cox, and Oxford and Carlisle and Edinburgh. We have wandered together along the Borders, and by the sands of Solway, and on the banks of Tweed, by Melrose and Dryburgh, by Sweetheart Abbey and the priory of Lanercost. Everywhere our programme was the same—I the idle but interested and (I hope) not altogether uninteresting companion, he the keen practical worker with his 'man,' always a patient sentimental being, with a patient sentimental name, be it Edwin or Arthur or William; said man bearing a burden of tent and lunch and leggings and camp-stool and easel. Which apparatus being duly erected, at some spot where Nature and old memories of man in spire or castle or mill or bridge made a fitting harmony, there the great man, full of keenest enjoyment in the loveliness of the scene, and in the small troubles of his 'man,' standing perhaps at an angle of 45° in a gale to support the tent, and in any oddities of the inhabitants who were sure to gather round, still steadily pursued his object, unhasting, unresting, from morn to noon, from noon to dewy eve, with a suitable interval, be it understood, for an excellent

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luncheon. When our trap conveyed us back in the evening there would unfailingly be one large, or two small drawings well forward to completion, expressing with greater or less adequacy, as the fortune of the day decreed, something of the artist's ideal.

"That ideal may be defined perhaps in a few words, but the words themselves are so full of possibilities, that the definition may not carry us very far. On the purely pictorial side, its aim is to express the *modesty* of nature, the infinitely subtle *gradation* of harmonious sympathetic tints, which the skies and the great moors and downs and levels of English landscape are constantly revealing to those who have eyes to see. On its sentimental side its aim is to express the natural joy of cultivated minds in the harmony of man's work and God's, as we find that harmony in the landscape of an ancient land like ours. The spire embosomed among trees almost as old, the castle towering over cliffs as threatening as itself, or gathering into itself all the savage grandeur of the great moorlands it dominates; the still river with its barge or bridge, the seashore with its humble cottages and nets and fishing-cobles, everywhere nature, and man influencing and influenced by nature; such is Mr. Orrock's ideal on the sentimental side. To this is added whatever of grander and nobler sentiment the song of poets or the romance of history or legend have interwoven with the visible loveliness of nature. The Borders, with Scott for their poet, and all their stories of flood and field and foray; and the old abbeys, with their romantic memories visible still in storied vault and fretted canopies; old Father Thames, flowing past Oxford and Windsor and London and Greenwich; all these had their sentimental charms, which inspired him in his choice of subject and dignified his treatment of them. And I think there is one other element of a personal or historical kind in Mr. Orrock's ideal—the sentiment of reverence for the great masters of his craft, Turner and Cox, De Wint and Constable. The country that was good enough for them was good enough for him; he loved to follow their footsteps, to see this fair gentle

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humanised land of ours through their eyes as well as through his own; and while painting entirely as he himself felt and saw, still, if here and there he recognised some unthought of, unintended echo of one of these masters in his own composition or colour or subject, it was a pleasure to him, as though he felt the master's hand resting for a moment in benediction upon him.

"For Mr. Orrock, like all really strong men, has mingled in his nature much reverence with his strength. He knows, no man better, good work when he sees it, be it work of the dead or work of the living; and good work, and good work alone, can elicit any real word of praise from him. I have seen him in the midst of one of his mad humours of jest and anecdote, suddenly brought up to attention, as it were, by a pregnant or suggestive remark, by a fine vista of landscape, by a piece of good workmanship, be it in tapestry, in porcelain, or in picture. The real man was on guard at once, the strong brow gathered over the eyes, the mouth set firm, the alert sleuth-hound attitude assumed. The judge cast off the jester's motley, and put on the ermine; in a moment, unconsciously, infallibly. I have never in any one, whether on the bench or at the bar, or in the experimenter's laboratory, or wherever I have seen serious wrestling with real problems mark itself as it does on face and figure—I have never, I say, in any one, seen such intensity of concentration as marks the face and figure of my friend when he is really, as the phrase is, on business. And while naturally this intense vision finds its chief scope in the regions of art where he is an acknowledged master, yet I have never found it fail him wherever any excellence visible to the critical eye was in question. I have found him able to class like an expert antiques of Egypt or Greece, although they were not in any sense specialities of his; my wife and others have bought with much profit and success articles of antique jewellery on his advising. I am quite confident that if he were called upon to judge of the genuineness of a manuscript, or the authenticity of a signature or a *bordereau*, he would, before

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he was done, beat the experts on their own ground. The whole visible world, so far as man has handled it, that is his province.

"I have spoken of Mr. Orrock's mad humour. The phrase is an inaccurate one if it suggests any idea of weakness or irresponsibility on Mr. Orrock's part. Nothing could be further from the fact. There is always method in his madness, there is always a thread of wisdom in his web of jesting. Rather is the humour one expression, and not the least delightful expression, of the abounding power of the man. He is so strong, he knows so much, he has met so many people and seen so many places, and infused his numberless experiences with so much of his own vitality, that the mere scraps and bywords of his conversation are instinct with that freshness and unexpectedness which constitutes humour. I have, not on one occasion but on dozens, seen bystanders in a country road, or fellow-diners at a public hotel, or fellow-travellers in public coach or railway train, sometimes great ladies, sometimes mere country bumpkins, dragged in spite of themselves out of their own preoccupations by the go and humour and rush of our talk, of which he of course was the inspiration, and in spite of themselves forced to burst into laughter. I never saw Mr. Orrock in any crowd for ten minutes, without his becoming more or less a man of note in it: voice, form, conversation, all indicate a personality unusual and interesting.

"Finally, like all strong men, he has his great likes and his great dislikes. No one can be a more generous friend, as I think these notes of our twenty-one years' friendship are sufficient to indicate; no one can be a more determined enemy. But he is an enemy only of shams and frauds and humbugs and cranks. He abhors fads and affectations and fantasies; he detests hypocrisy and cant. A plain bulldog Englishman, a 'brither Scot' though he may call himself, English plain ways and plain speech and honest downright truthfulness are all in all to him. Good old English houses and furniture and pictures are the best in the world for him; and good old English hospitality and friendliness

James Orrock

and courage never had a better exponent than in James Orrock, the artist and the expert, but above all the *man*.

"Since the above was written, I have been reminded of an incident of our friendship, not only amusing as a *malentendu*, but interesting as an illustration of the hospitable and humorous character of our friend.

"Some years ago I was appointed along with two others a deputation from the Association of Schoolmasters in Secondary Schools in Scotland to represent our views in parliamentary circles. We had arranged to stay at the Hotel Metropole, but Mr. Orrock, as soon as he heard of my intended visit to London, telegraphed insisting on my coming to 'No. 48' as usual. I consented, nothing loth, but on arriving in London proceeded to secure a room at the hotel for one of my colleagues, the other having made his own arrangements. I then wired my friend as follows: 'Have secured your room at the Metropole: my address will be 48 Bedford Square.' Thus on the Saturday morning. On the Sunday morning I was startled by Mr. Orrock's 'man' appearing at my bedside to inform me that there was a gentleman downstairs asking for me, who seemed to think I expected him; his name Mr. X. In much dubitation I got on my clothes, and made haste downstairs. There I found Mr. Orrock in affable conversation with my friend from Scotland, he having, as I afterwards learned, been also informed of the latter's arrival, with the additional particular that the stranger had ordered his luggage to be taken to his room. As soon as I appeared Mr. X. exclaimed, 'Oh, here is Mr. Marshall; we'll have breakfast at once, please!' Mr. Orrock, who had evidently been enjoying the situation, responded 'Certainly; I am quite hungry myself,' which remark seemed to rather startle Mr. X. He was startled somewhat more when I proceeded to introduce Mr. Orrock to him, till the truth dawned on him, and in anguish of soul he cried, 'I'm afraid I've made a great mistake: is this not the Metropole?' He had taken

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Mr. Orrock for the landlord (or, must we say, manager?) of that distinguished caravanserai; and the aspect of the rooms with their Turners and Constables and priceless china had in nowise disturbed his ideas. My poor friend was ready to sink into the ground with shame; but the kindly humour of our host soon put him at his ease. We had a merry breakfast together, and in due course, with abundant friendliness as of 'brither Scots' on all sides, he was convoyed to the real and only Metropole."

CHAPTER XXVIII

Some great ones of the English school—Richard Wilson—Old Crome—Cotman—George Morland—John Linnell—William Etty—Thomas Gainsborough—Vincent—Holland—Collins—Copley Fielding and H. G. Hine—George Dodgson—John Phillip—Millais—The English art the offspring of the manly, healthy, and sensitive English nature—Portraiture and landscape painting the most individual of all—The women and children of Reynolds, Gainsborough, Raeburn, Romney, and Hoppner—The dignity and high-breeding of Lawrence's portraits—"Turner in his way as rare as Shakespeare"—"Müller stands next"—Wilkie's purity—Landseer—Final words.

THE narrator's task being at an end, it seems fitting that the central leading figure should himself speak the words of this brief concluding chapter. Gathering from the "careless ordered garden" of Mr. Orrock's detached thoughts on the mastery and manner of some of the most famous of the English painters, I put together the observations that follow:—

"RICHARD WILSON, R.A., was one of the greatest of all landscape painters. He was imitated by Turner and Crome, and lauded by Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Constable, the latter of whom said that Wilson revived the great art after it had been dead for a century. Wilson's style was of the grandest, or those masters would not have praised it. A consummate artist in *paint*, colour, simplicity, and tone, he was the legitimate successor of the masters, but more conventional as to arrangement of subject than the English masters who succeeded him. The painters who followed Wilson, especially those who wrought in water-colours, formed the great English school, which is entirely national.

"OLD CROME is an English landscapist who was founded on the Dutch, and also on Wilson. Hobbema, however, was his chief model, but the difference between them was considerable and in favour of Crome. Hobbema was mechanical and methodical in his work, and always completely master of the *spot-stroke*. You can

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count the leaves on his trees, and every touch throughout his work. Not so with Crome. He had an *abandon* and richness of tone and chiaroscuro which places him above all the Dutch masters except Cuyp. Crome was a master of tree-forms, which he etched and drew with masterly dexterity—whose leaves and branches were full of *character*, and could not be counted because of their infinity.

"COTMAN, too, ranks with the great ones. He excelled alike in water-colours and oil. He drew and painted architecture, shipping, figures, and all incidents appertaining to landscape, with final skill. Turner was Cotman's idol, and in many of his shipping subjects the evidence of worshipful idolatry was strikingly apparent. Cotman's water-colours displayed for the most part a strange tendency towards the *mapping* of masses of colour. The blues, yellows, and browns are often startling in this respect, and his drawings have a dry look because the colour was *lifted* almost to a fault. He was, however, free from this idiosyncrasy in his oil pictures, which were always harmonious, rich, and in tone. As a draughtsman, colourist, and composer in both oil and water-colours, Cotman stands forth distinctly amongst the masters of the English School.

"Of GEORGE MORLAND as a painter it would be difficult for a painter who loved and knew the art to speak too enthusiastically. He appeals to the painter, lovingly, first and last. His style was the grandest. There is no finer, freer, fuller employer of the medium known to us than George Morland. Hals, as a freehand writer in paint, was not his superior. Morland's genius embraced almost every kind of subject. He was a portrait painter, figure painter, tree-, and sky-, and sea-painter. But, he was perhaps, above all, an animal painter. His brush was always affluent and juicy, and his colour was of the rarest. His pencil sketches were in feeling something like Gainsborough's. The English School would have been incomplete without George Morland.

"JOHN LINNELL is another master that our school could not have spared. He was an original as a man and a brother, and originality of expression stamped his work; a master in portraiture

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which he practised before his genius as a landscape painter was discovered. Like some other of our masters, he was proficient both in oil and water-colour painting, and had the English feeling for painting in the former medium, with the delicacy and transparency of water-colours. His range, from the clear and rich chiaroscuro up to the loudest high lights of the cumulus cloud, could not be excelled. Linnell's finest pictures are, in the minds of the best judges, the climax of landscape painting. There is no more original painter in the English School than is John Linnell. His work defies comparison with that of any other master.

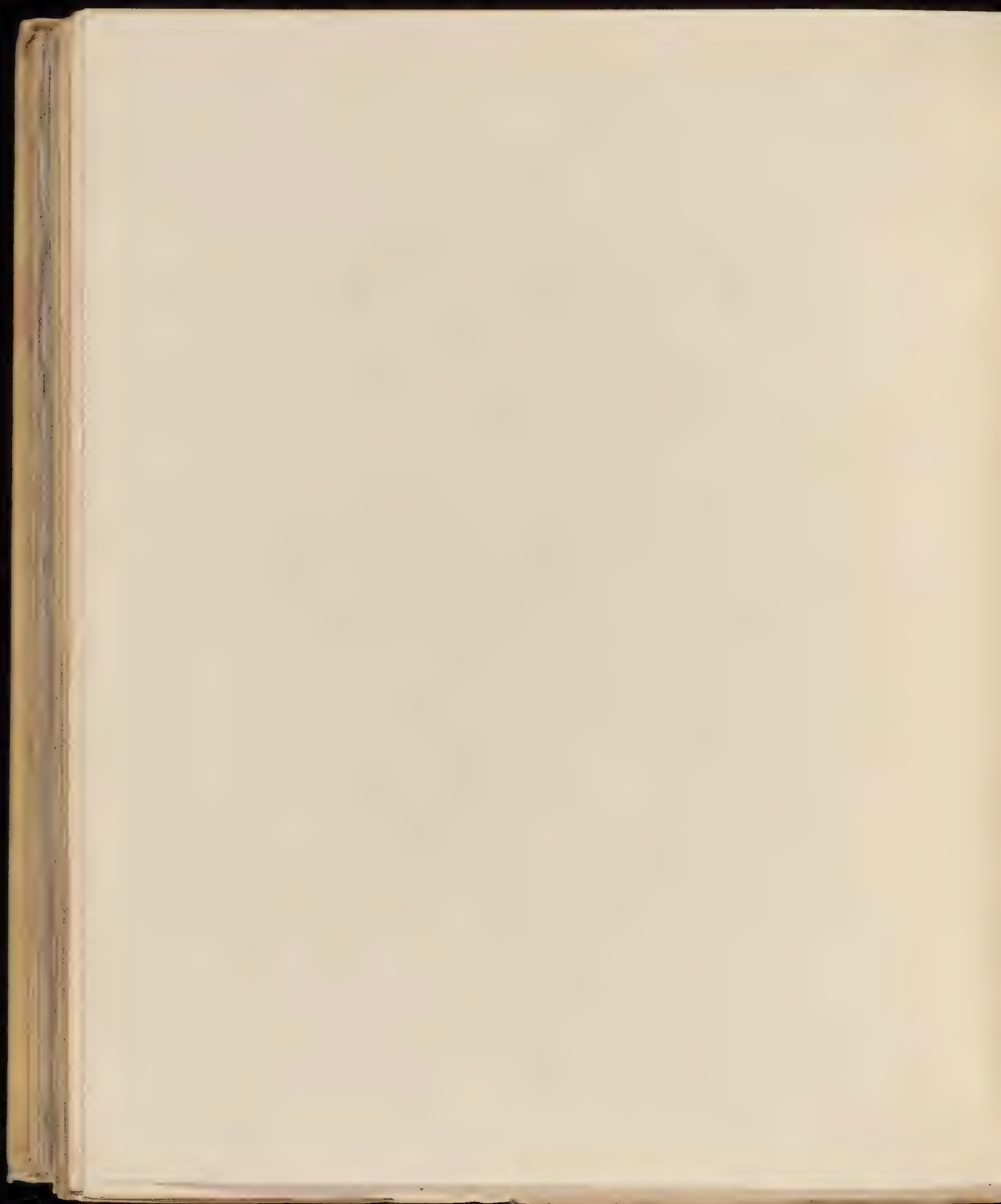
"WILLIAM ETTY is the finest painter of the nude in an open daylight effect. In his flesh there is the breath of life: the blood courses through the veins. Etty in his ardent passion to paint colour was constantly careless of his *outline* drawing, but the *real* and subtle drawing in the modelling of his figures nothing could surpass. The five grand masterpieces in the Edinburgh National Gallery place Etty on the topmost pinnacle of British art.

"In THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH we have the best beloved of all English painters. His method affords another example, and one of the earliest, of the union of oil and water-colour feeling. He was the sweetest of colourists, and sensitive to a degree. We have in Gainsborough the ideal master of female portraiture, and a painter of landscape and figures that are purely and lovingly English. The figures, the animals, the still-life that flowed from his grace-giving pencil, only Gainsborough could have painted. Although Morland could depict almost every subject with the same fluent freedom, there was a distinction in Gainsborough's, better felt than described, which was the painter's own. Even Reynolds himself must yield to Gainsborough as a spontaneous painter, one who wrought all unconscious of the greatness of the gift he had received direct from God!

"VINCENT, although a member of the Norwich School, with Old Crome at the head, was not on the top tier among the masters. He was, however, always charming and healthy in his work, and



Old Mill on the Yare.



James Orrock

some of his larger pictures, notably the 'London from Waterloo Bridge,' and the 'Greenwich,' are distinguished and impressive. He occasionally overcrowded his subject with incident, and almost invariably accentuated his composition by means of the prominent introduction of a black and contrasted white object which (like the white horse of Wouvermans) was regarded as a sort of sign-manual of the painter.

"In HOLLAND we have another master of architectural and shipping subjects. He was for years known chiefly as a water-colour painter of flowers and of Venetian scenes. Latterly he painted in oil, and, thanks to his long and sympathetic practice in the purer medium, his oil-pictures possess all the quality and charm of water-colours. Like the works of Cox and Lewis, Holland's oil-pictures are prized now more than his water-colours. And yet for years they had no market value! Holland was—Holland, unlike and separate from anybody else, a man of independent mind and individual method of work. His Venetian subjects are, in their way, unique. With their brilliant colour and dazzling light they *kill* the old 'black' masters who painted Venice.

"COLLINS, sweet in colour and tone, was one of the people's painters, because he delighted them with the realisation of his true feeling for English life, and painted what he and the people saw together. 'Trying on Father's Sea-Boots,' perfectly represents the artist. The rich luminous background is worthy of Old Crome.

"I would couple COPLEY FIELDING and H. G. HINE. Fielding had two leading features in his art, atmosphere and rain-cloud effects. He was, perhaps, the most beautiful rain-cloud painter in the world. Ruskin's praise of him is well deserved. He painted rain-sky from the deepest gloom to the tenderest sunlit shower. In this particular Turner never excelled him. Nothing gave Fielding such joy as the sweet lighted downs with the filmy rain-cloud stealing across them. H. G. Hine and Fielding were the predominant painters of the Down Country. Hine himself was a native of the South Downs, and was unquestionably a closer student

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of that lovely region than Fielding. Hine knew more, as it were, of the *ways* and features of the country, which had been familiar to him from his childhood. He had a perfect knowledge and a complete mastery of the subtle drawing and modelling, and could produce that velvety sheen-like surface which is the painter's charm—but to many painters so elusive!—in the Down Country. Hine, of all men, could paint the thin garment of earth and herbage which veiled the drawing and modelling underneath. He alone gives solidity to the foregrounds as well as aerial gradation to the distance. Fielding was for ever looking for atmospheric effects, so as to weave earth and sky into a picture. Hine was nearly always gentle and placid, and he therefore but seldom painted wild seas or storm-charged skies. Fielding did both, and his pictures of running seas with racing craft are amongst his most coveted works. Fielding, however, always missed the leading features of the Down Country, which Hine never *could* miss. We look in vain, for example, in Fielding, for the exquisite groups of South Down sheep with the silent classic shepherd leaning on his crook, and watched by his faithful tailless dog. The celebrated Hine called 'The Lewes Downs,' in all respects one of the most poetic pictures in the world, possesses those pastoral features. Fielding had of course a much wider range than Hine, and the delicacy of touch which produced his aerial effects came from a hand as sensitive as the source of the harmonies of a Sarasate or a Joachim.

"GEORGE HAYDOCK DODGSON has not altogether unrightly been called the English Watteau, and yet he is an artist whose works are to this day unappreciated. Dodgson's style was his own, and lent itself by instinct to the poetic treatment of his subject. He was a consummate draughtsman of the architecture, trees, and figures that accorded with his themes. He painted beech and sycamore trees with the hand of a master. The illustration of 'A Fête Champêtre' is a replica of his greatest work. It was painted for his friend and brother-artist, Edward Duncan. 'The Carol Singers' was painted for an engraving in the *Illustrated London*

James Orrock

News. Nothing could express the feeling of a moonlight Christmas more sympathetically than this drawing. The village musicians singing and playing before the gate of the fine old English hall, the village church and trees enveloped in the moonlighted atmosphere, together with the masterly construction of the subject and technique, satisfying the most exacting requirements in that respect, form a poem in art that could not be surpassed. How much longer is this great and original artist to wait before he is raised to his pedestal? George Dodgson has been dead about twenty years.

"JOHN PHILLIP is one of Scotland's greatest painters. Original in his method of work, a colourist of place, a splendid brush draughtsman, with a frank and manly execution, 'La Bomba,' 'La Brazura,' but above all 'La Gloria,' now in the National Gallery of Scotland, plainly point to and establish his rank in art. The two illustrations 'Holy Water,' and the masculine sketch of the 'Lottery Ticket,'—the grand picture of which, never quite finished, hangs, if I mistake not, in Sir Cuthbert Quilter's Gallery in South Audley Street,—are in Phillip's best manner.

"MILLAIS was probably the most *human* of all painters, because he possessed the most intense power of seizing the character and *life* of men, women, and children. Even his still-life was alive. The 'Raleigh,' 'Order of Release,' 'The School-Teacher,' 'Gambler's Wife,' 'North-West Passage,' and 'Mrs. Rossetti,' are among the most realistic of his pictures. Millais and Leighton were at opposite poles in art. Leighton was all for classic composition and grace of line; Millais for tearing leaves out of the Book of Nature as little altered as possible. God's real was to Millais vastly more than man's ideal. In landscape Millais was the direct opposite of Turner, who was for ever classic and dreaming, however humble the subject. Millais was an exquisite draughtsman, cultivated in the craft from early youth, and the skill thus acquired enabled him to capture the character of everything he saw for depiction. His drawing had a *spirit* of its own, Millais always and altogether. His intensity was for the soul and *life* which vibrated through

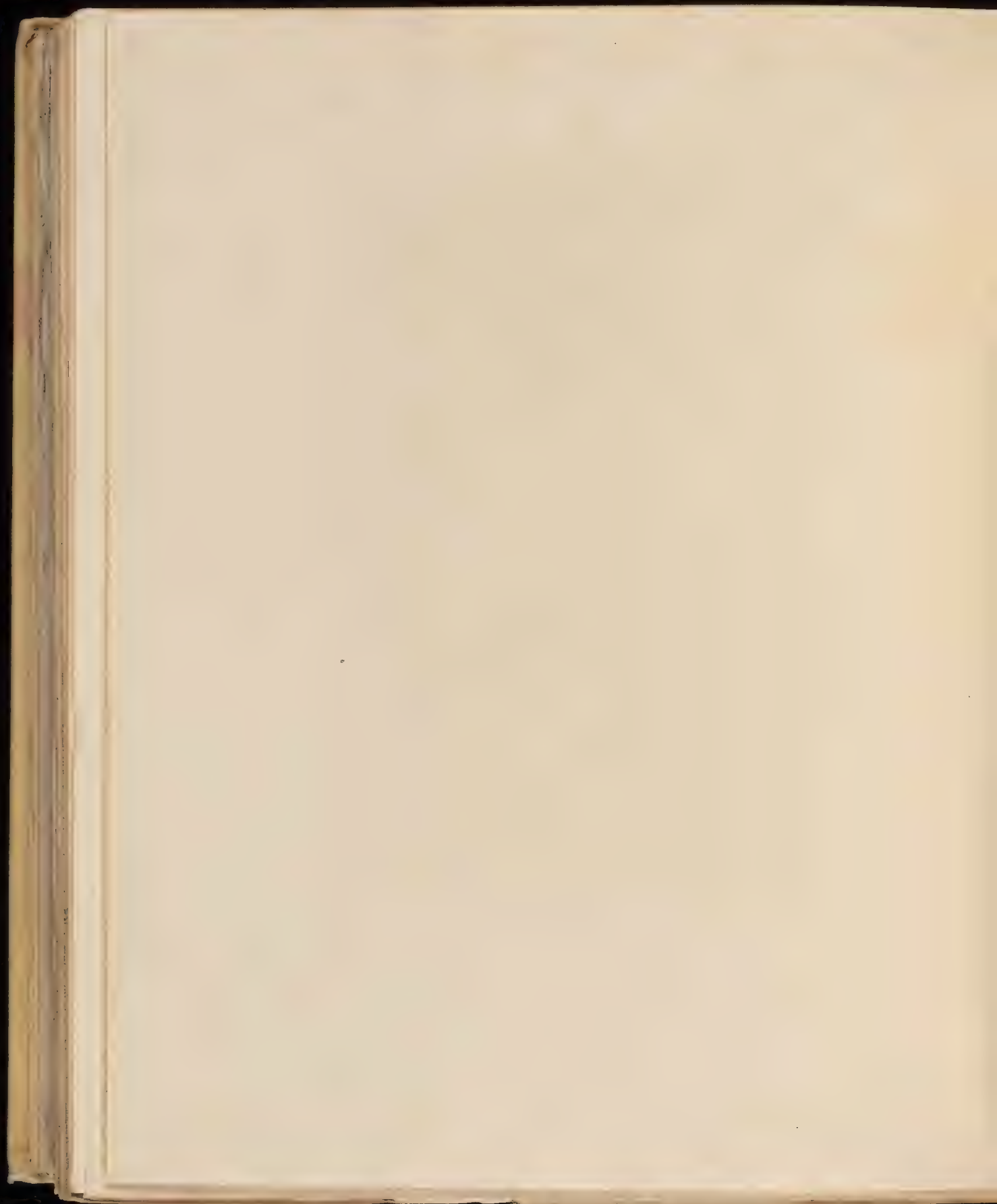
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his subjects. He was by nature a minute painter, and his so-called Pre-Raphaelite work was *his* life. The 'Ferdinand and Isabella,' and the 'Ophelia,' marked this period. Those who feel the colour of the Venetians, Dutch, and English, do not feel that of Millais, or of Burne-Jones, Rossetti, or Holman Hunt. These painters possess other artistic virtues; but, technique and colour being indispensable, neither exist in other masters except *true* colourists. Take him for all in all, Millais is probably the most prominent painter of the Nineteenth Century, and his humanity places him there because it found him subjects everywhere direct from the heart and soul of nature. Like all painters and poets, he repeated himself, and, like his art, he was frank, fearless, and natural.

"The English Art is the offspring of the manly, healthy, and sensitive English nature. The race has been welded and woven by education in manners and mind. I am impelled to think that its leaven (to change the figure) has some of its source among the clergy, who are settled in every village and hamlet in the kingdom, and who, by their breeding and culture, influence almost imperceptibly their every community. The art, like literature and science, is founded on the stepping-stones of past generations. These were the Italian, Flemish, and Dutch, the Spanish, and German Schools. As Shakespeare wrote with extant materials, taking tale, chronicle, and rudimentary play, and making everything by his transmuting touch his own, so have our English artists, in all departments of art, absorbed, assimilated, and individualised that which, in their domain, had been already produced. Portraiture and landscape-painting are perhaps the most individual of all. Reynolds, Gainsborough, Raeburn, Romney, Hoppner, and Lawrence have painted women and children with a tenderness and sympathy surpassing the efforts of all their predecessors; and the colour of health and sweetness of execution which they have displayed sum up their perfection. Lawrence has, perhaps, of all the English painters, imparted to his portraits



Lady Trimleston.





The Countess of Loudoun.

James Orrock

a degree of dignity and high breeding which is unrivalled. Indeed, some of Lawrence's finest work will rank, as *work*, with the best. English landscapes tower above all others. Turner, in his way, is as rare as Shakespeare. There is but one Turner, and it is impossible to imagine anything beyond his mastery in oil and water-colours. He created his art! Müller stands next, and, considering that he died at thirty-seven, his genius remains an unknown quantity. The entire list of landscape masters is brilliant, and jewel-pointed with individualities, each distinct and defined. Two leading features in the English Art are grace and elegance of composition, the latter as exquisite in its way as the composition of the great Italians. Another feature—negative, but concurrent—is the absence of vulgarity. True English Art is, in the psychological sense, pure art. The Dutch *genre* painting, for example, may be everything that is excellent in colour, in technique, in chiaroscuro; but the vulgar, not to say coarse, incident so commonly introduced into the pictured scene or story is never found in English paintings of domestic life and character. Take Wilkie, for example. Wilkie's pictures are essentially pure, and the subjects alone have drawn, from writers like Dr. Brown, poetically prose essays and lay sermons that will live as long as the pictures themselves.

“Landseer is one of the great English group. He is an exquisite composer of lines and quantities, and, as ‘The Shepherd's Chief Mourner,’ with other imperishable works of his, proves, a poet in paint. Ruskin has written one of his prose poems inspired by Landseer. We have in Hogarth another artist who was nothing if he was not separately, and to the finest fibre of his being, English. Never was the history of the men and women and manners of a time written with more merciless fidelity than it was by Hogarth, satirist, moralist, and consummate master of his art. Clothed withal in colour and style and *paint* of the highest class we have George Morland, English of the English, and at home whether he painted rustic scenes and character, or a

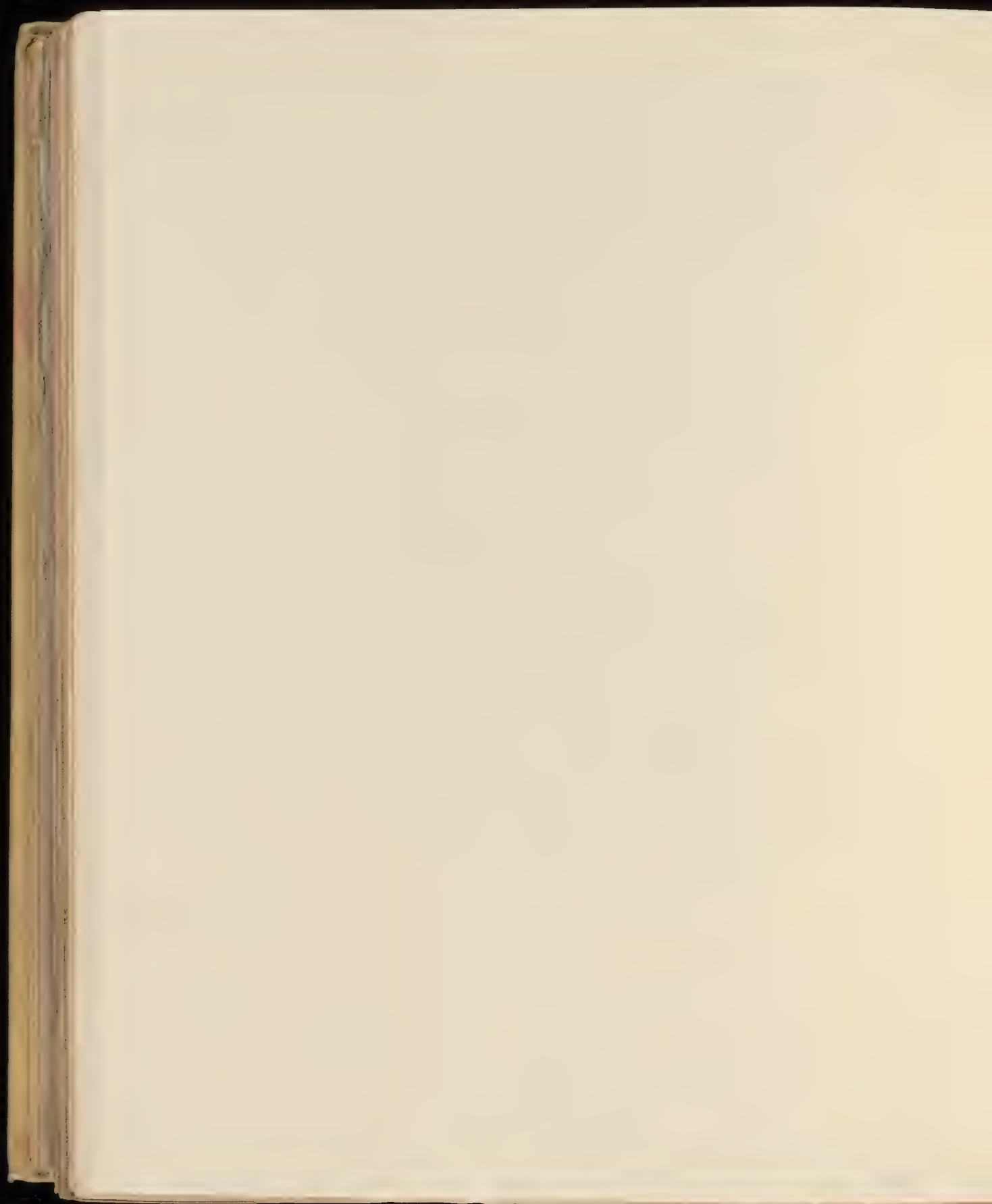
James Orrock

Watteau who took nature with him in his depiction of garden scenes peopled by ladies and gentlemen.

"Our architecture, wood-work, metal-work, and ceramics (notably in the Wedgwood and Chelsea ware) have the stamp of English Art, and, in their acceptance, bear testimony to the art instincts and refinement of the English character. There is yet a vogue for French Art. There are enthusiastic collectors and convinced connoisseurs who are 'French' to the backbone. I shall surprise nobody when I take leave to avow that the more fastidious and cultivated judges much prefer 'the English.' Our art is now in the ascendant, and, in relation thereto, I in conclusion adopt the motto, *Magna est veritas, et prævalebit.*"



THE "ORROCK" OWL.
Silver, Nuremberg



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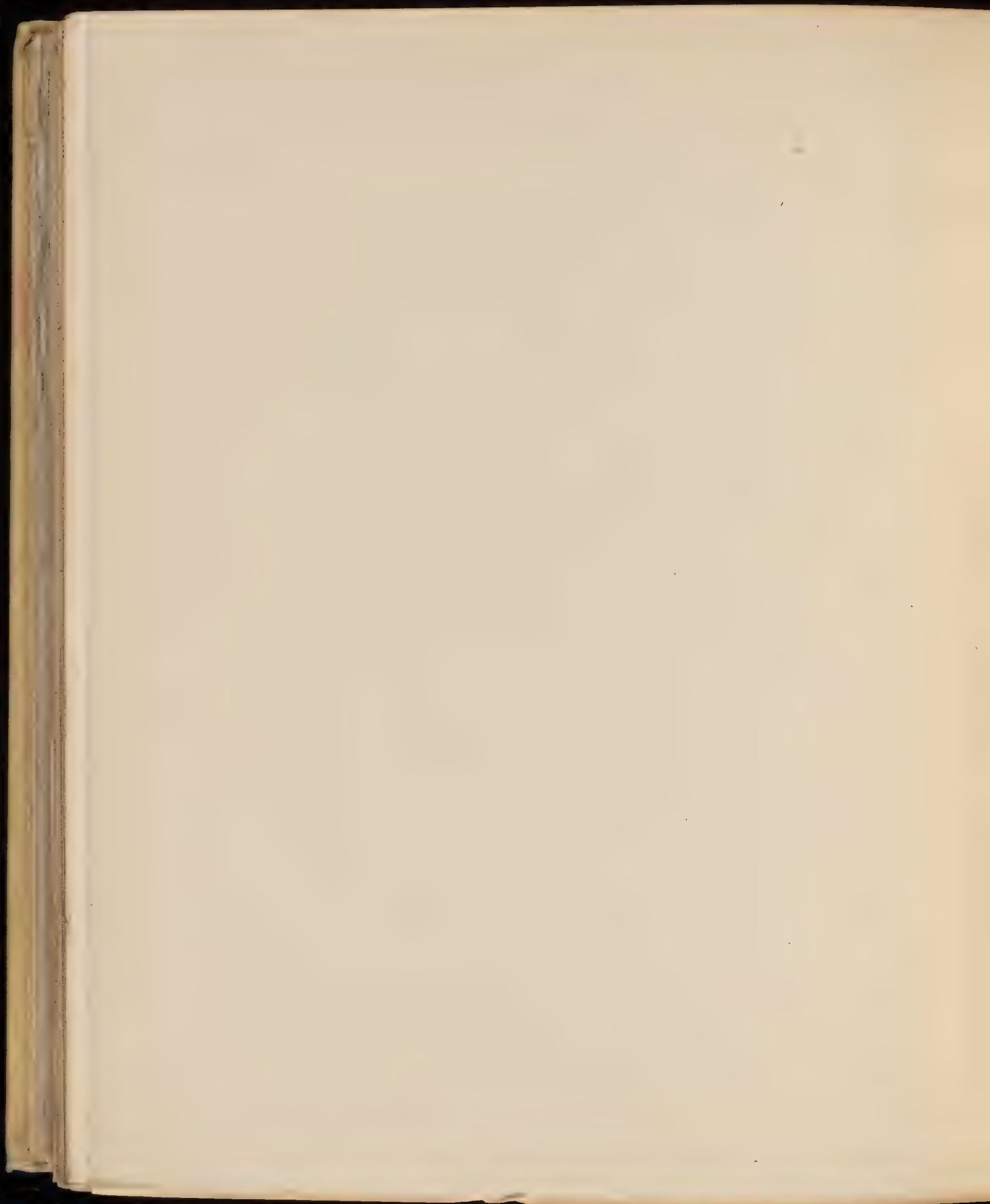
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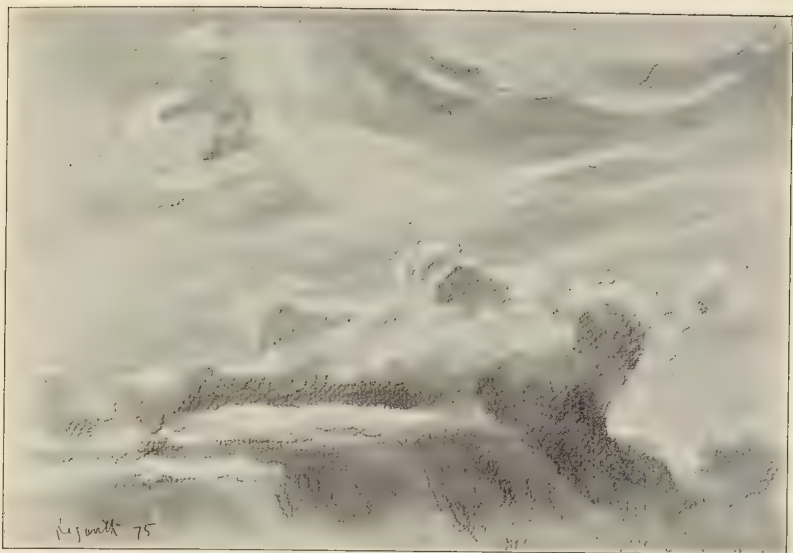
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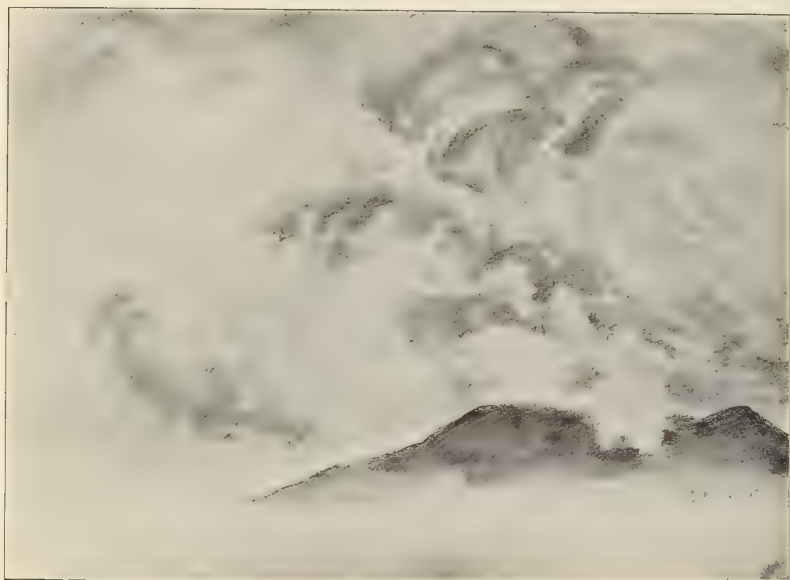
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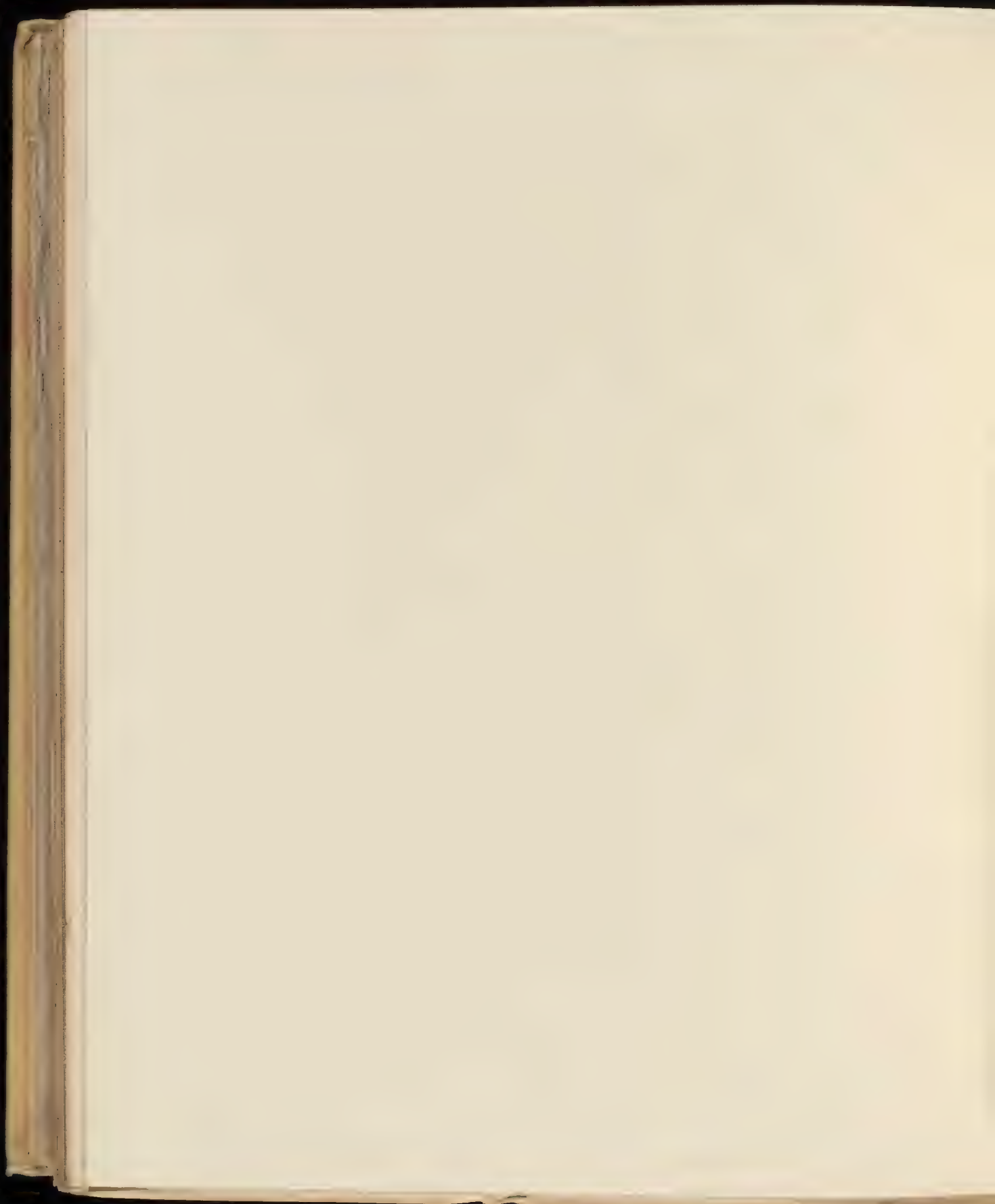
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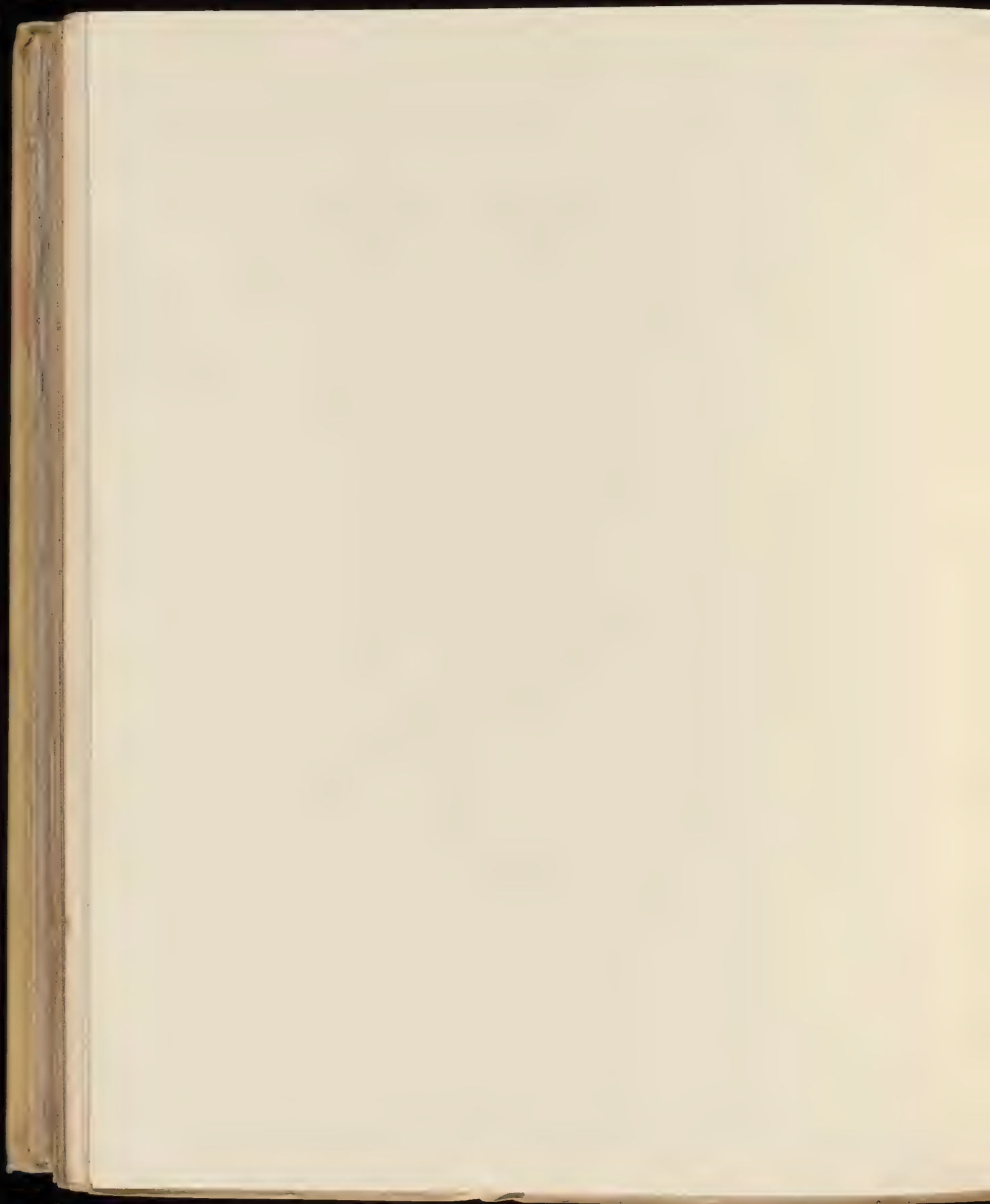
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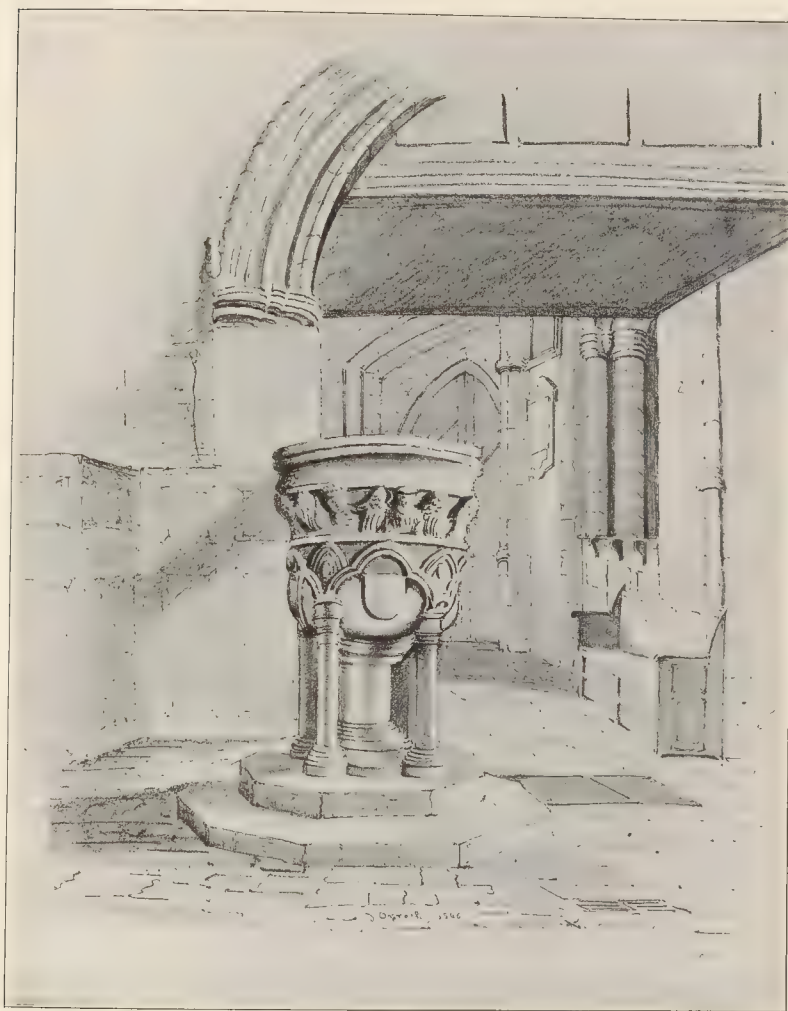
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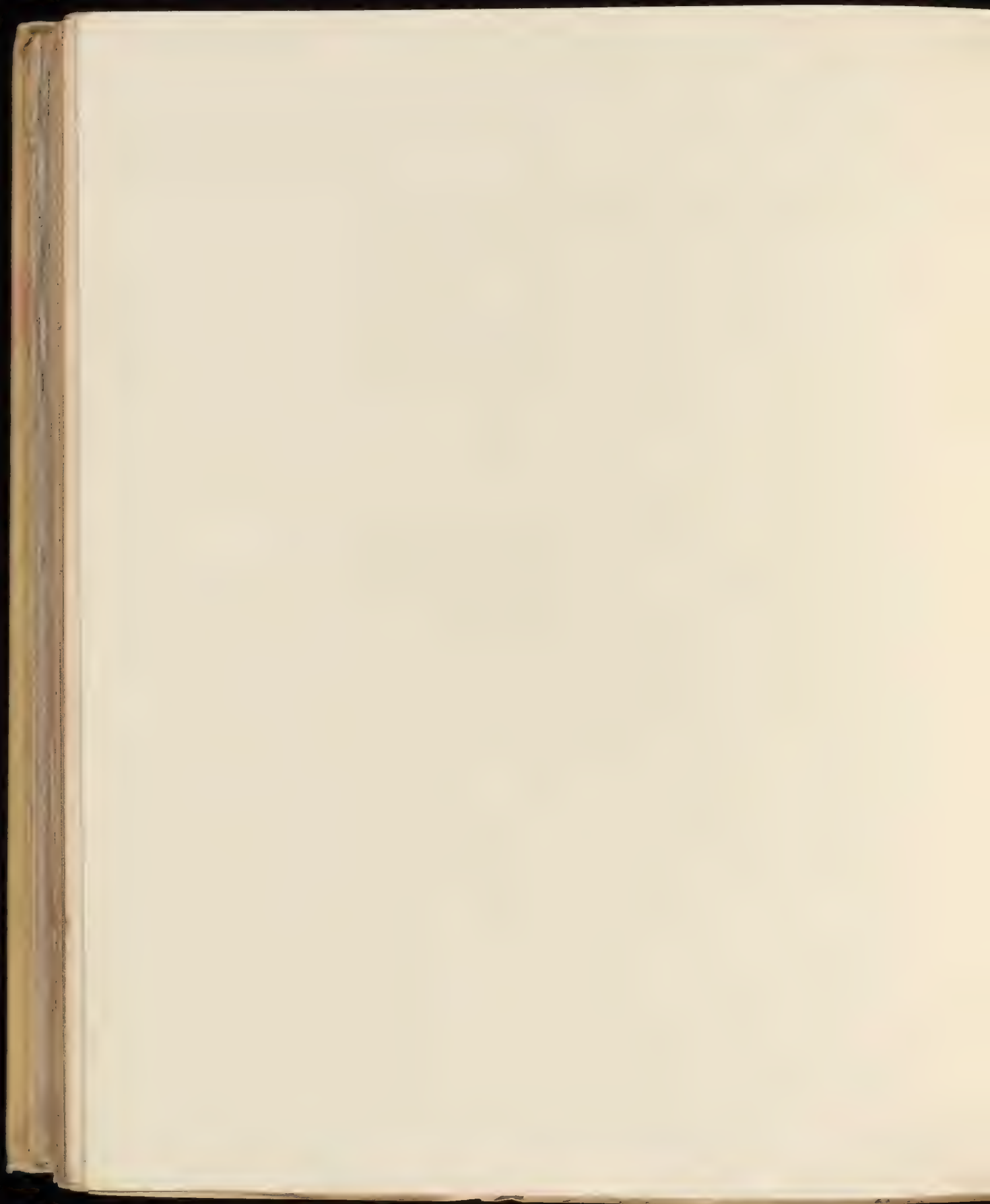
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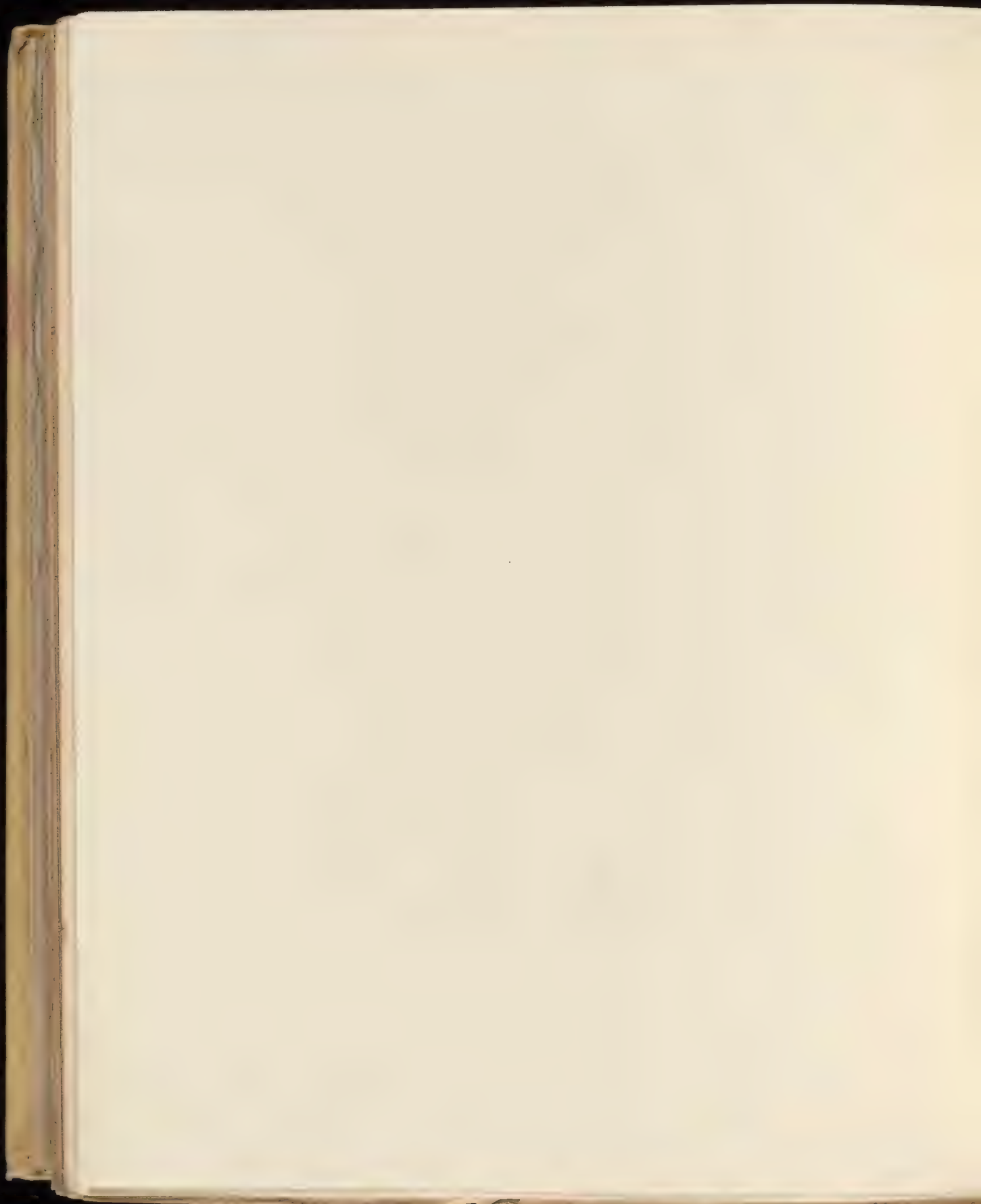
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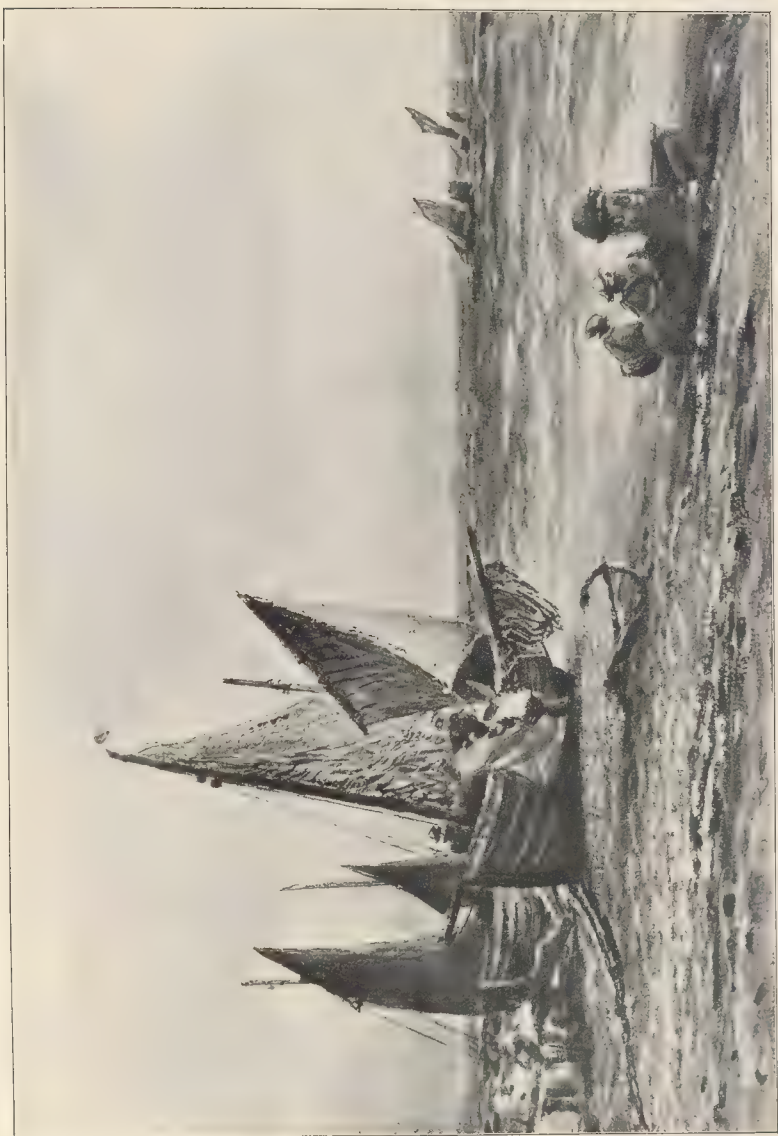
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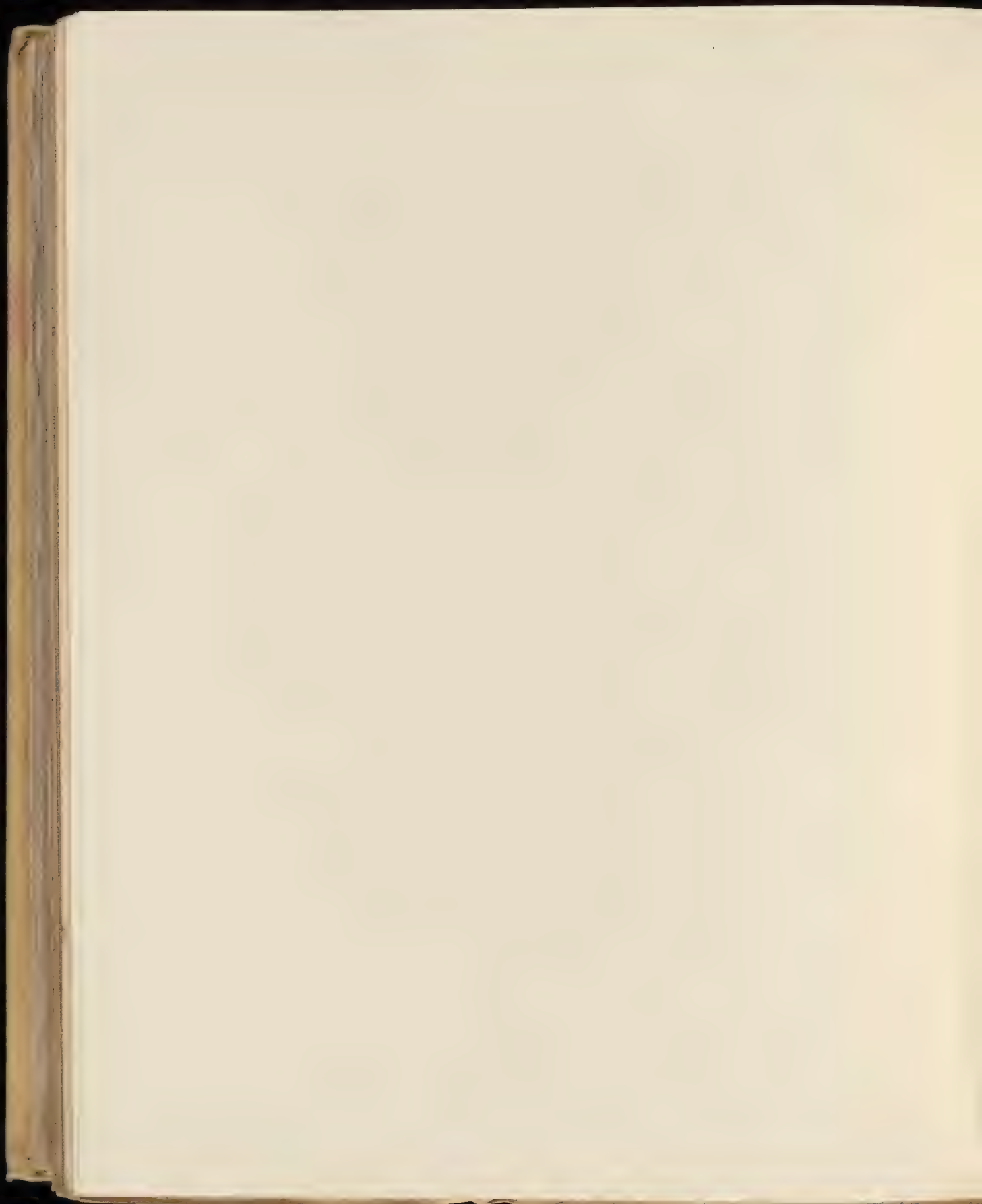
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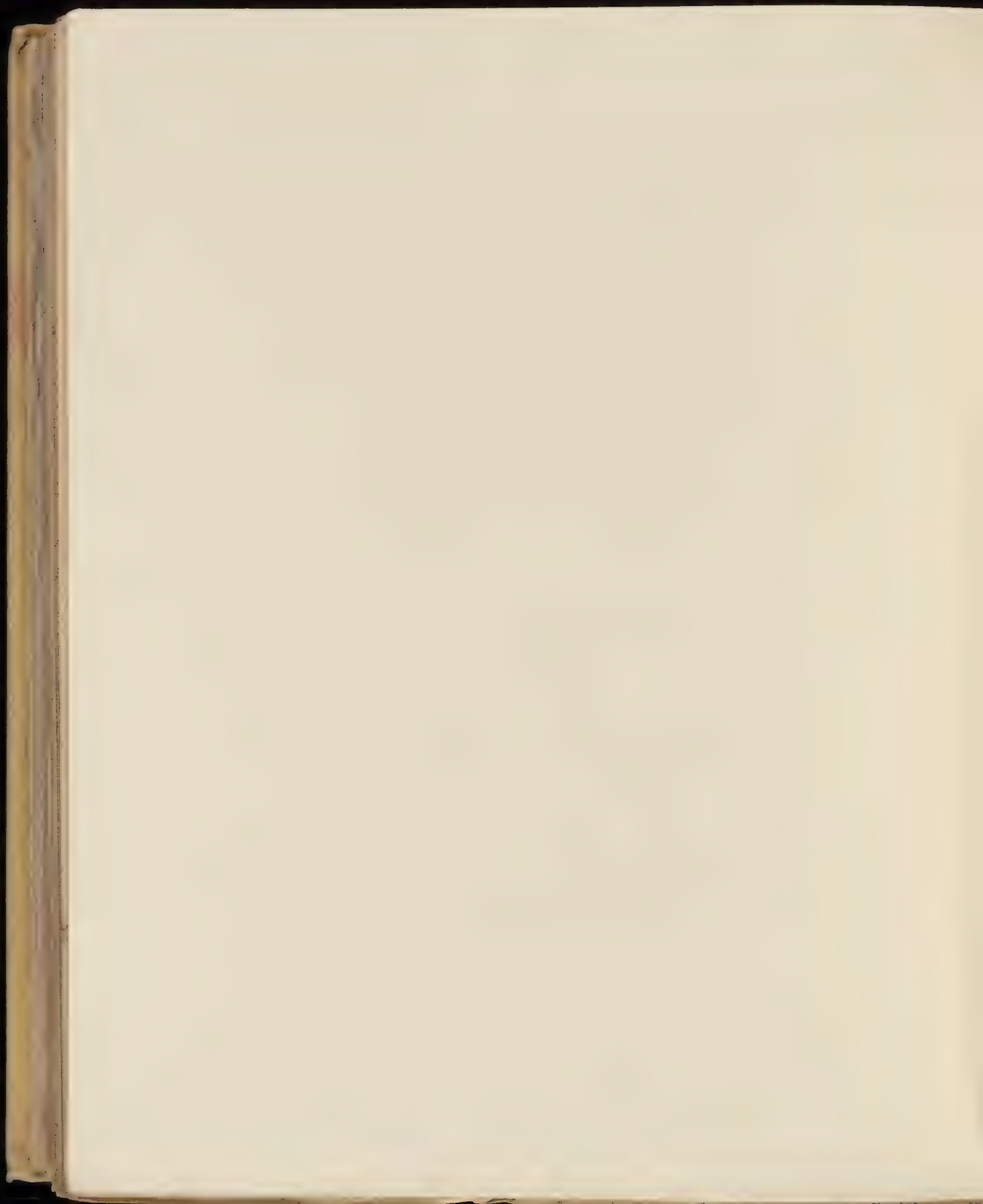
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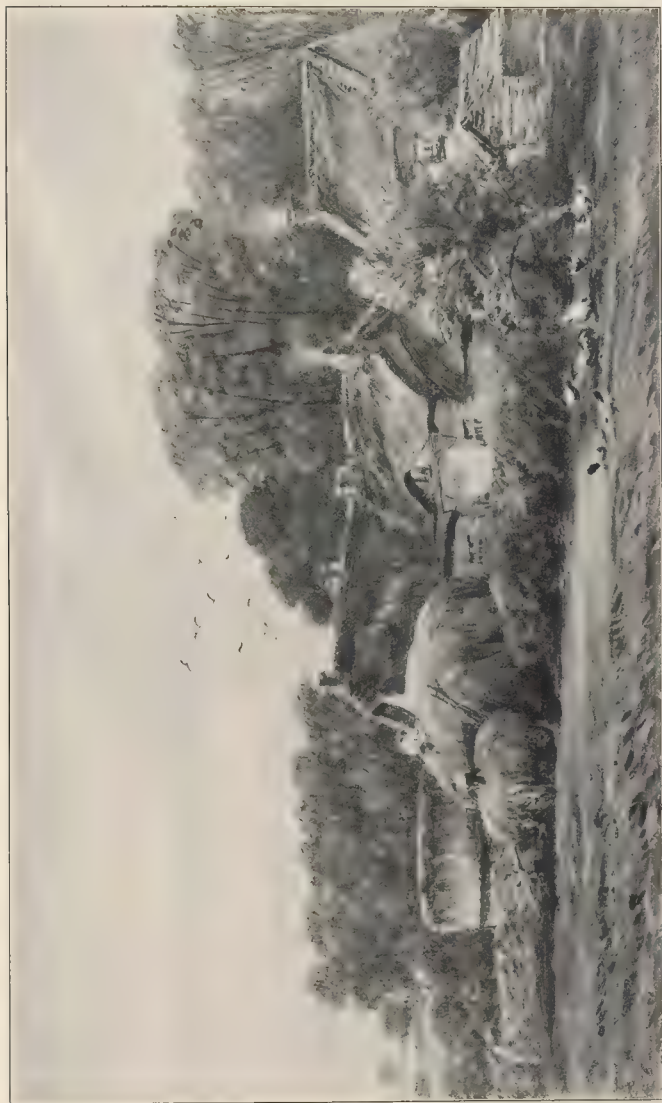
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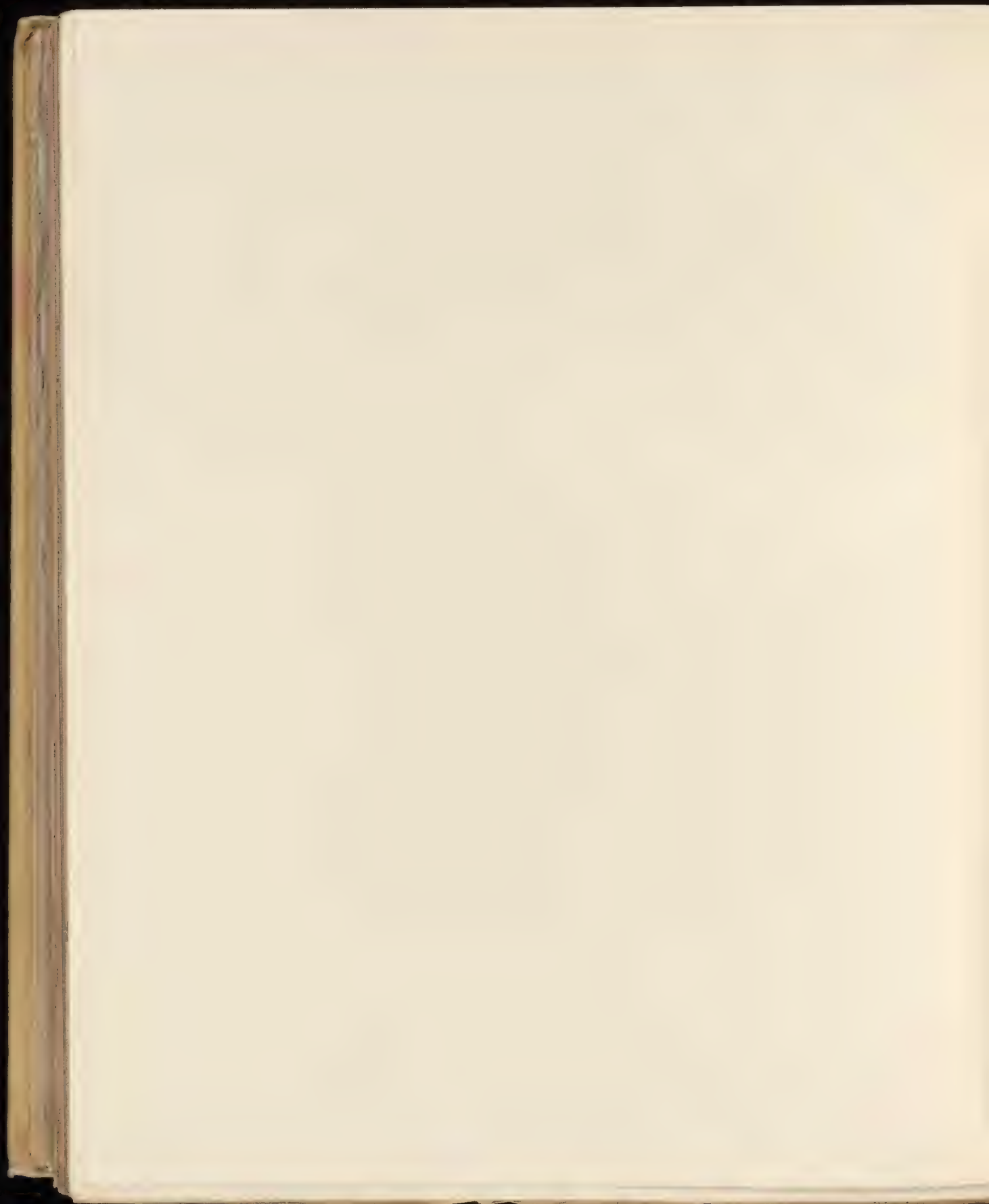
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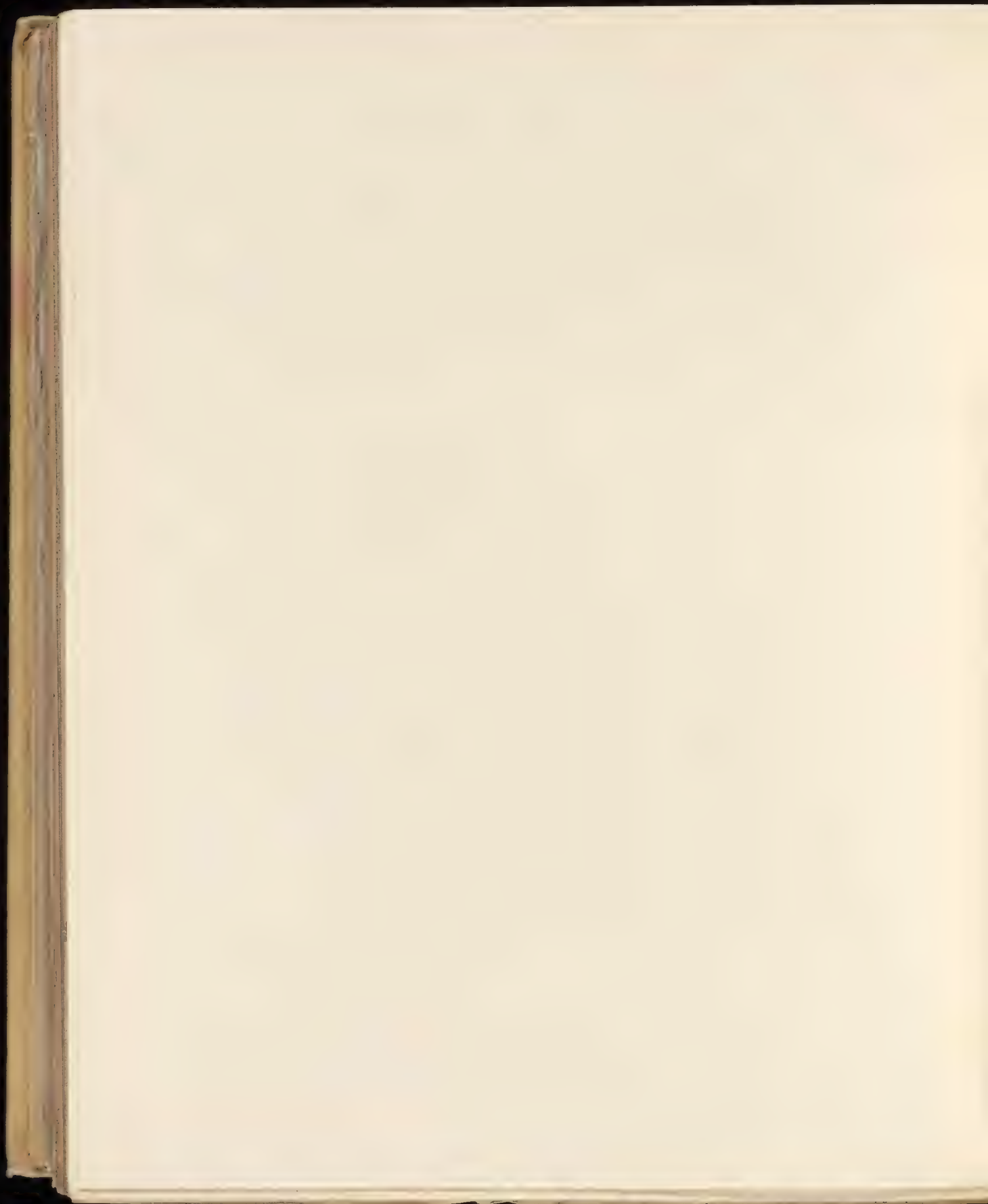
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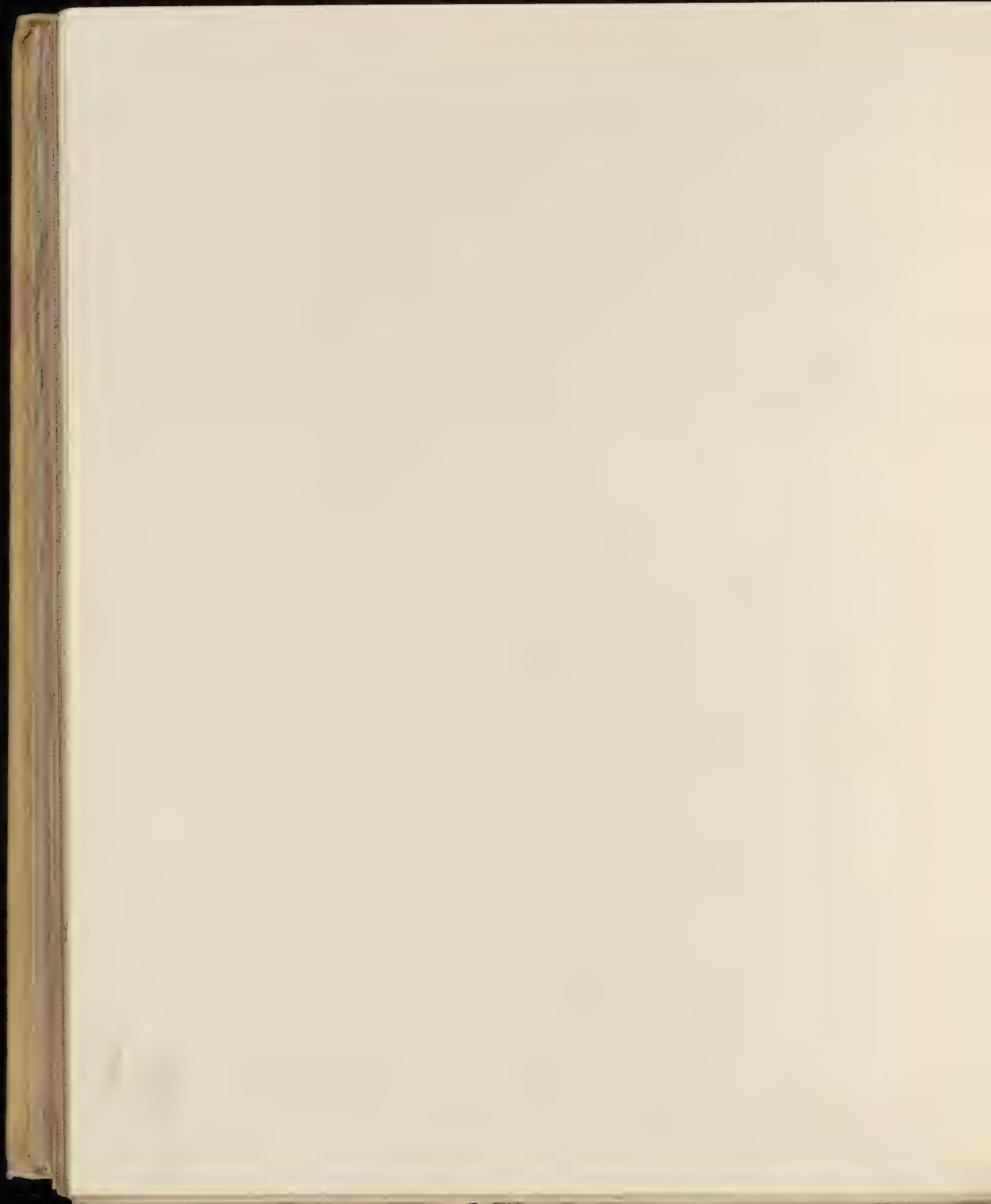
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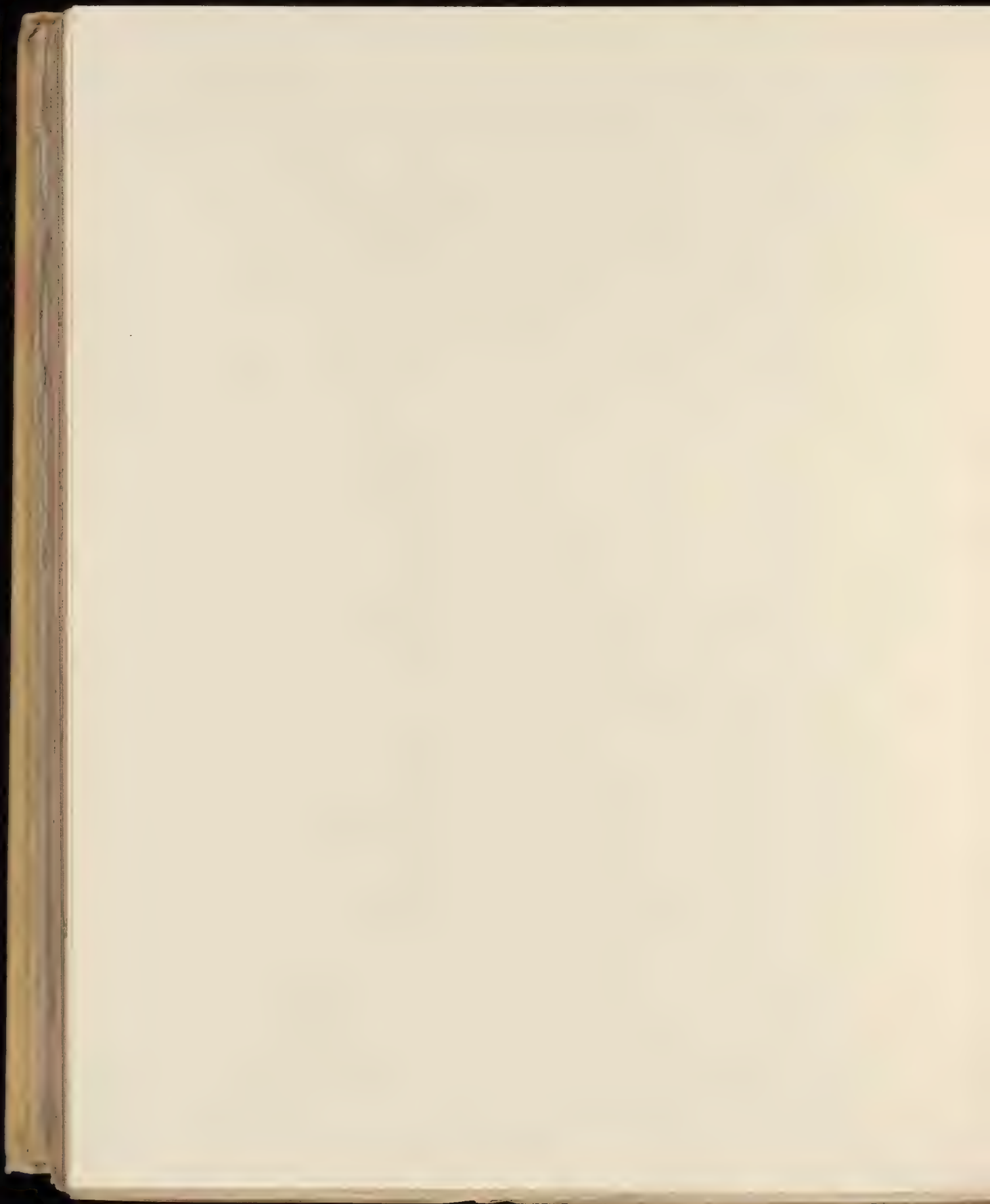
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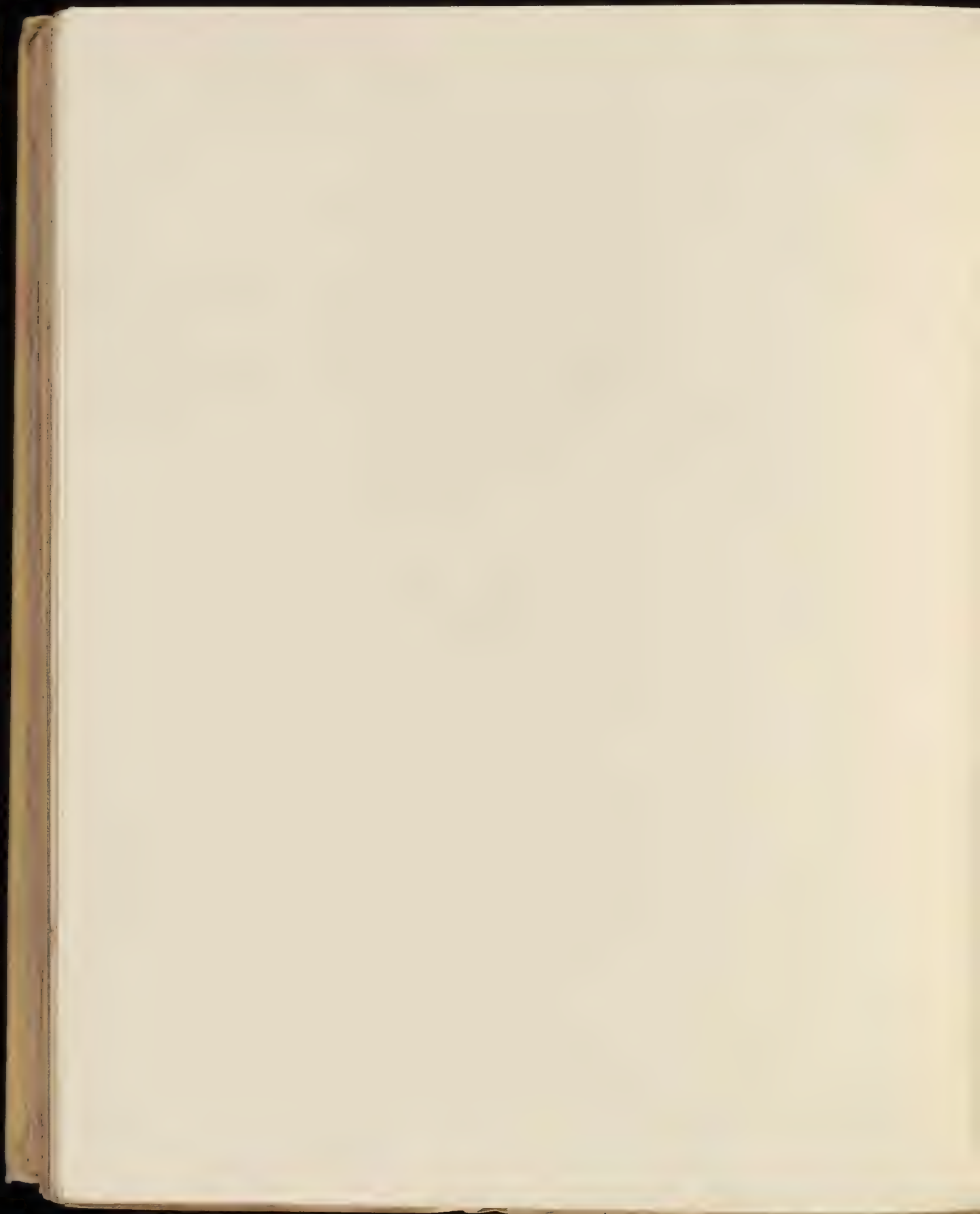
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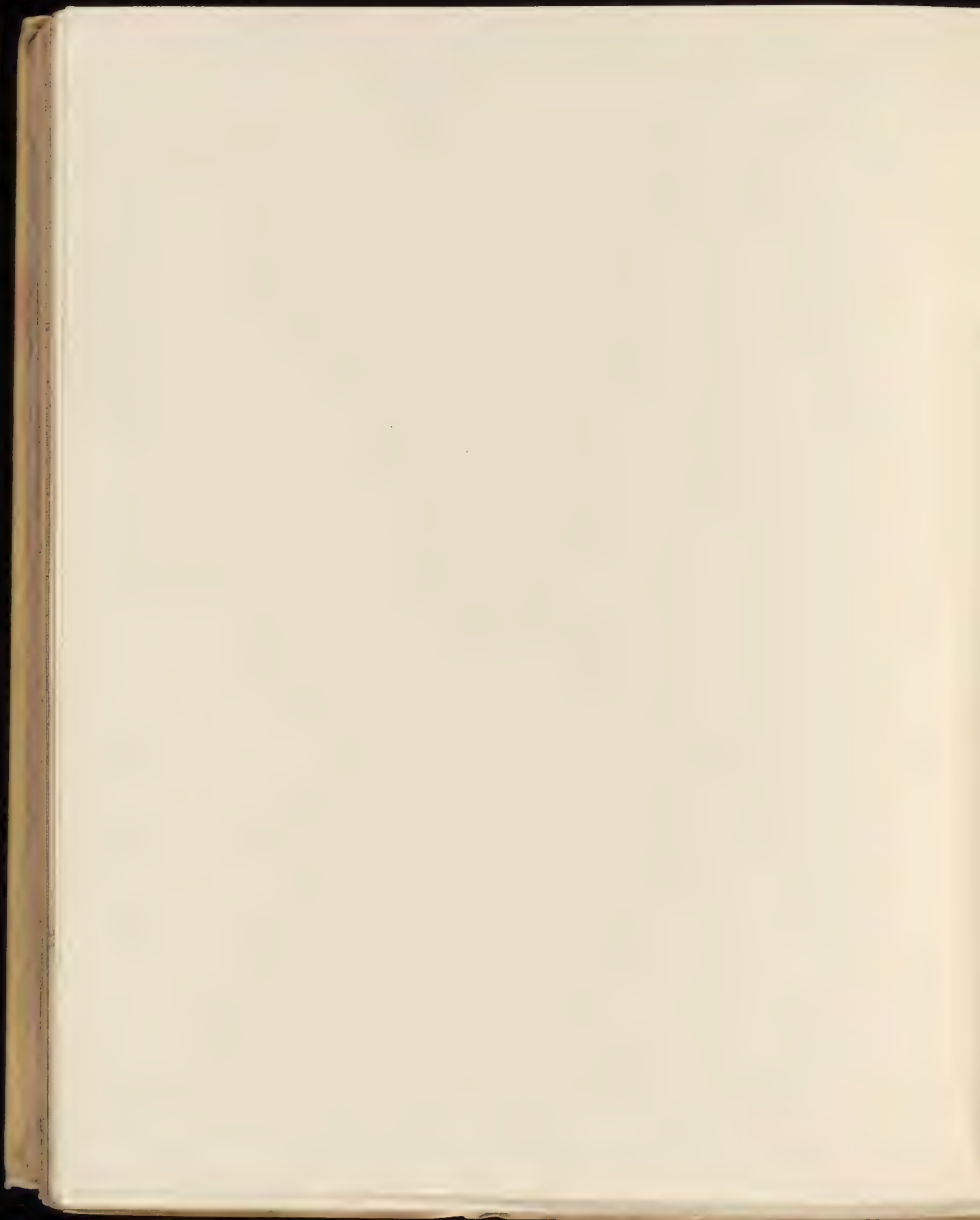
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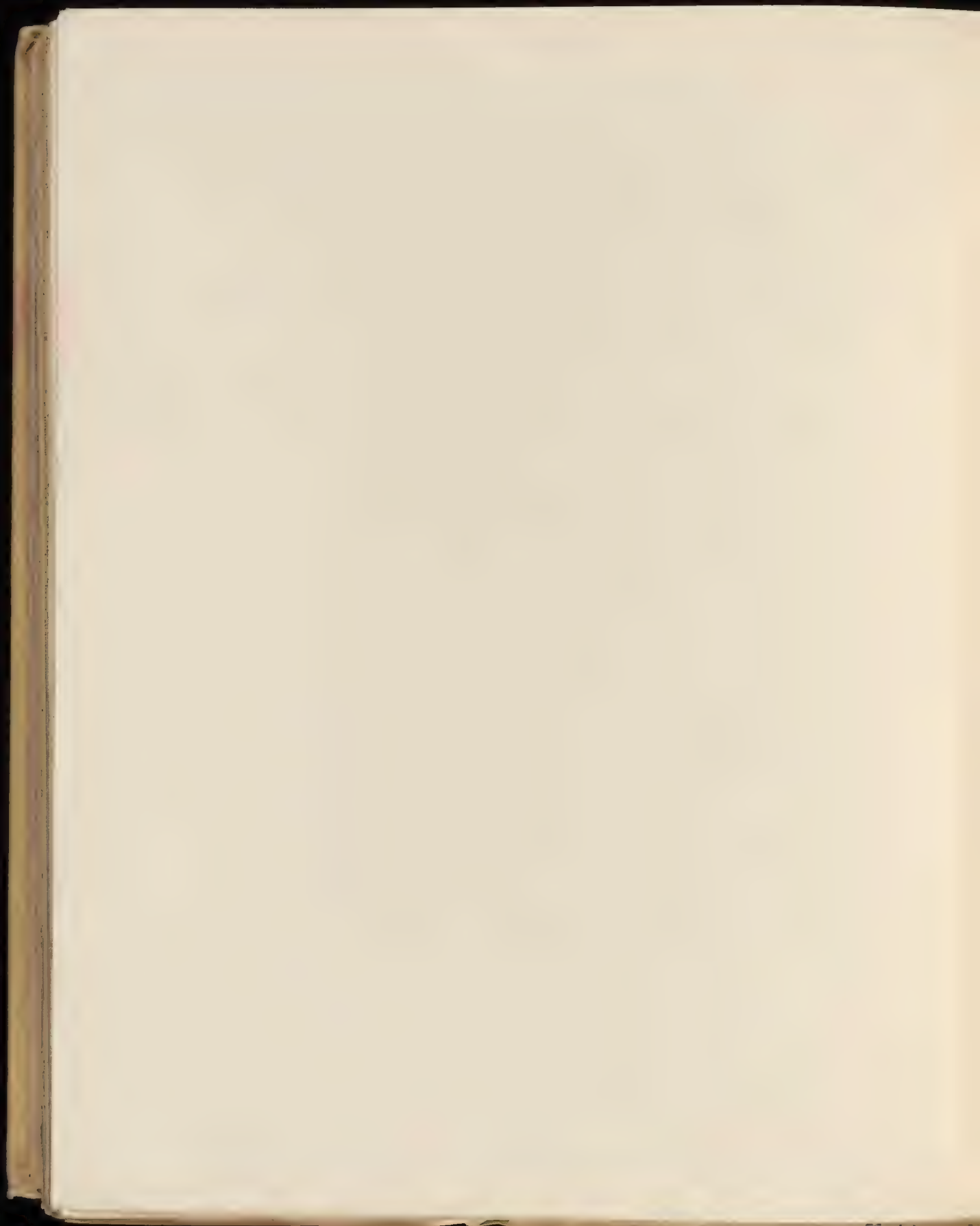


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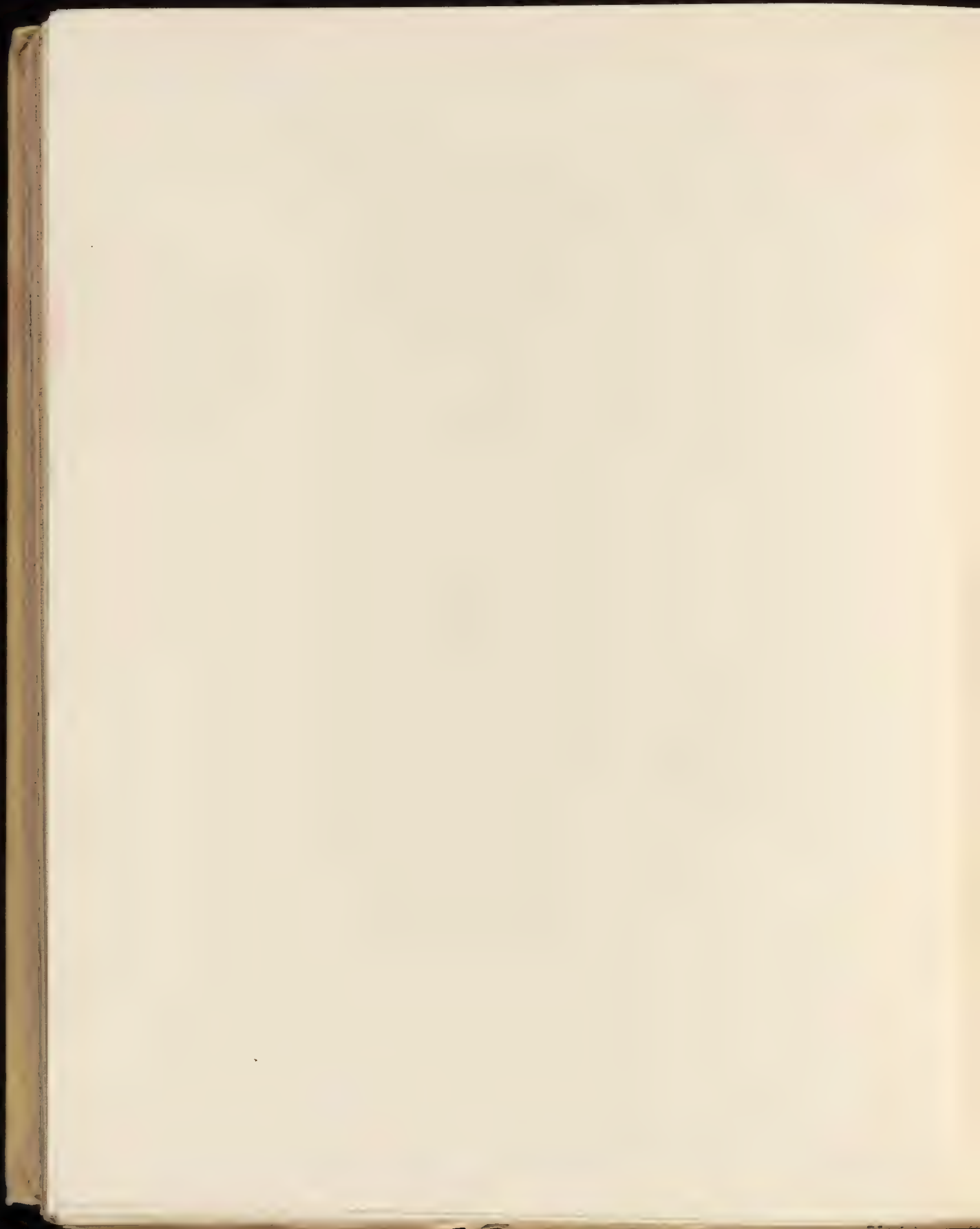


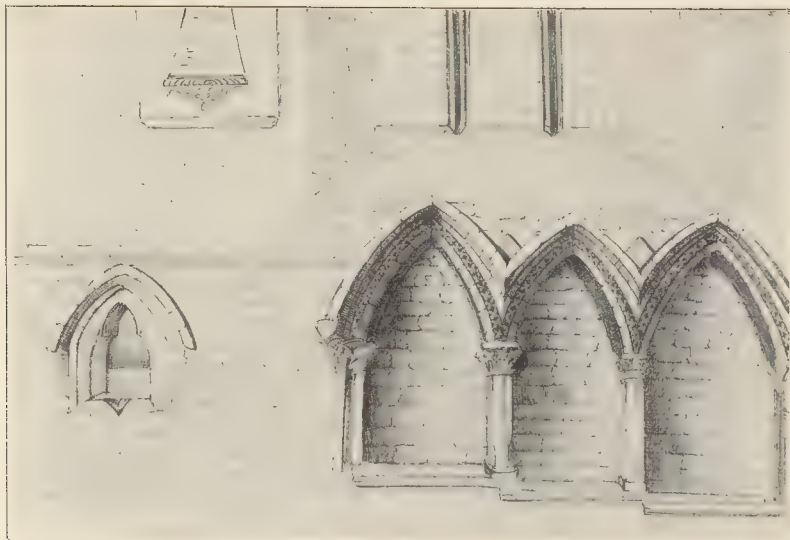
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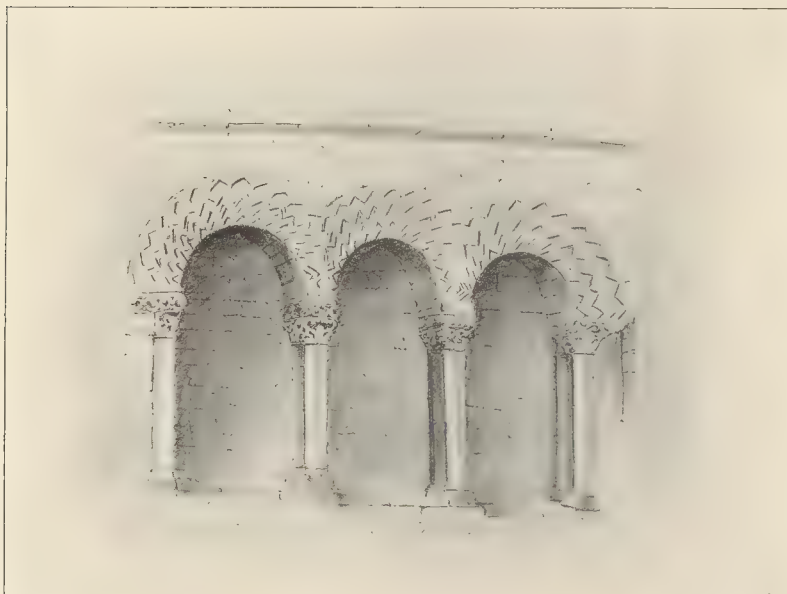
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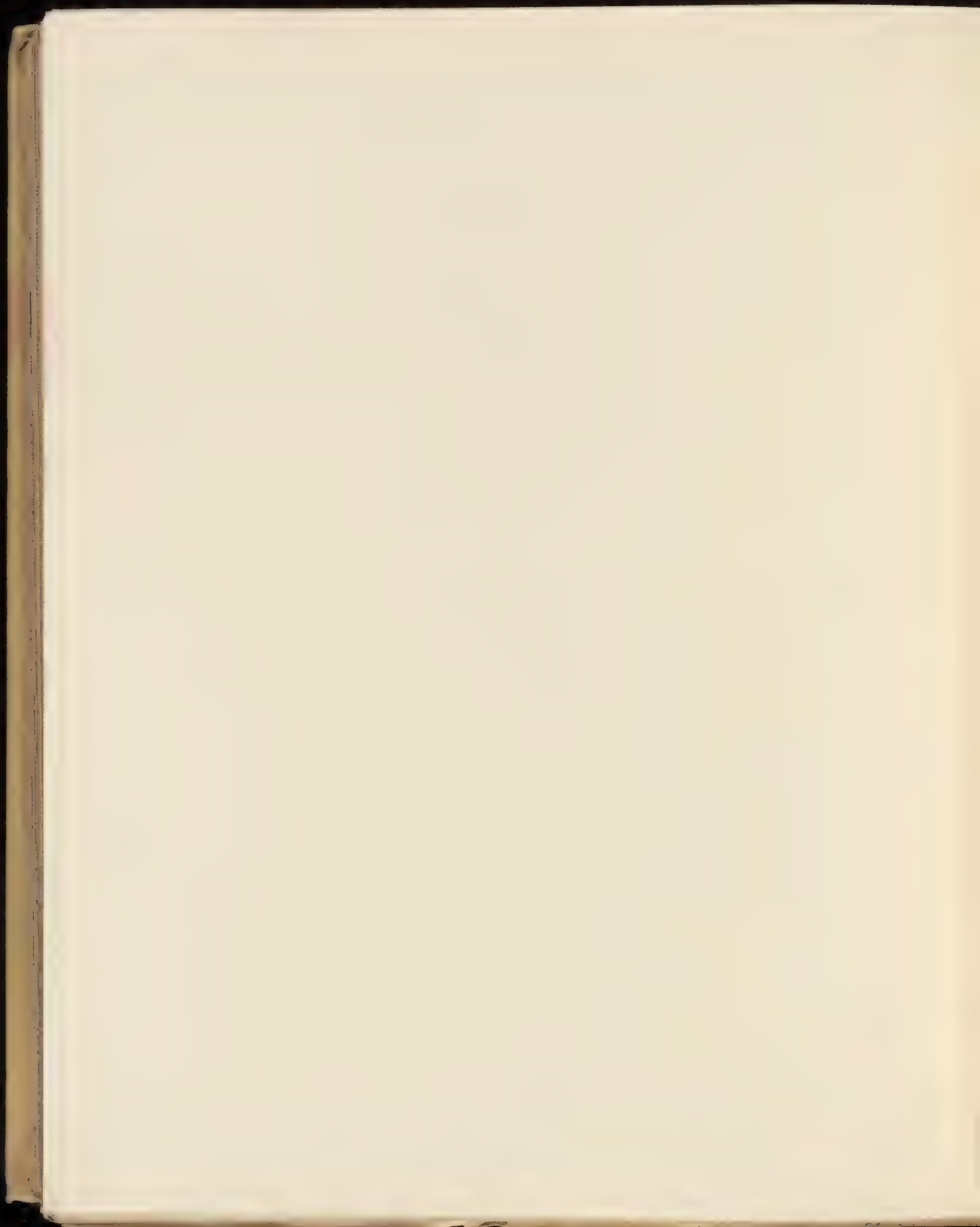
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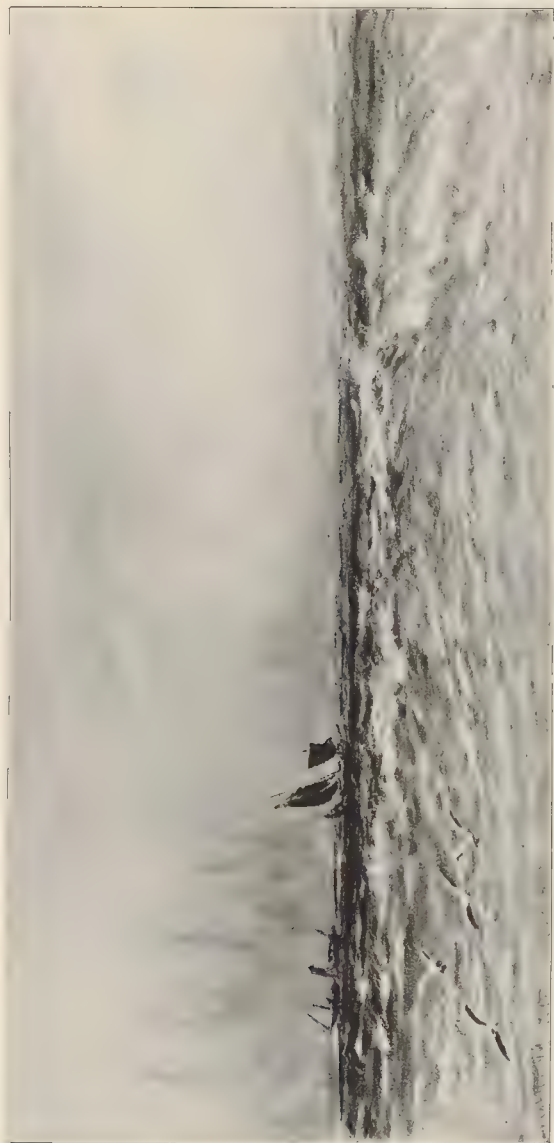
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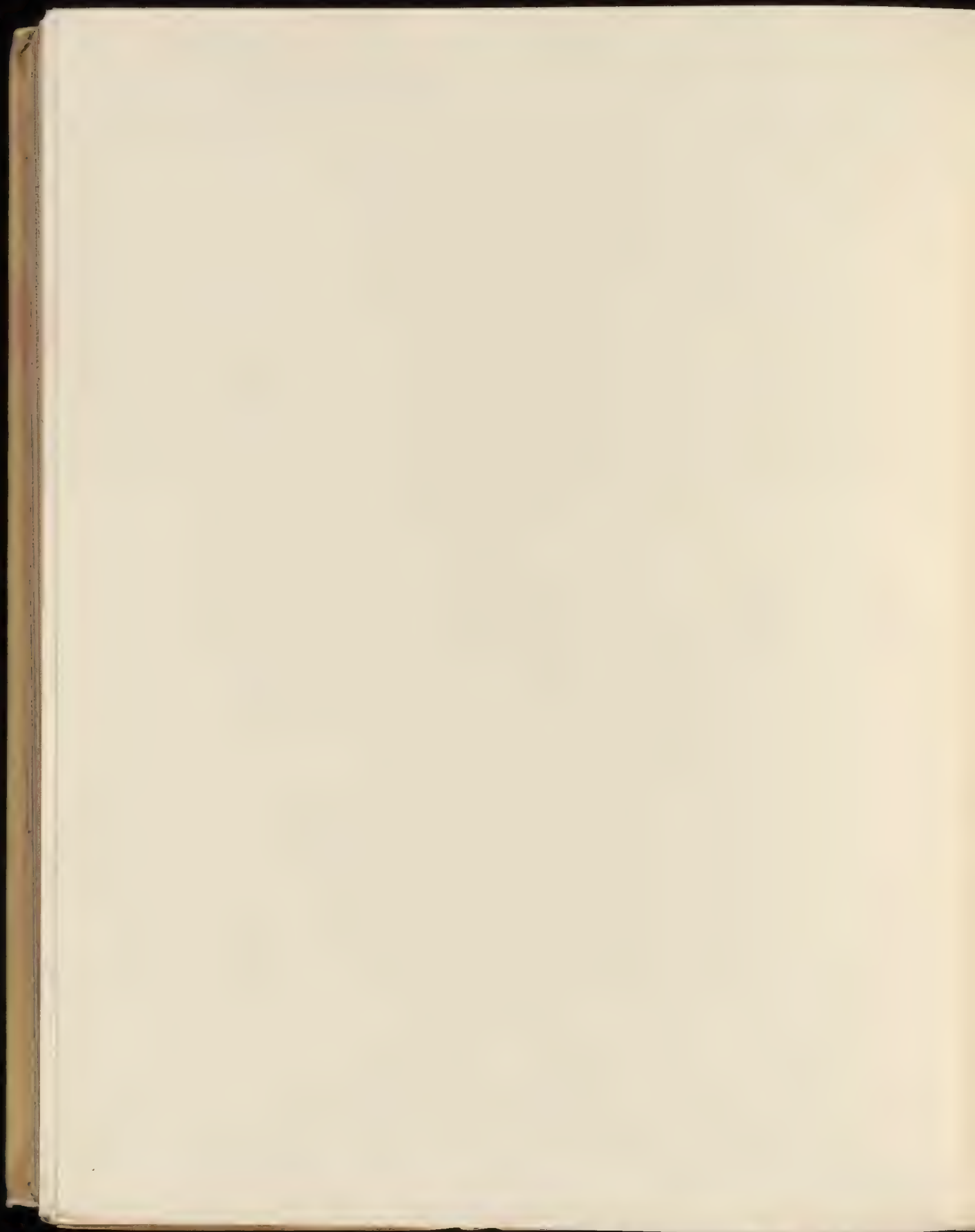
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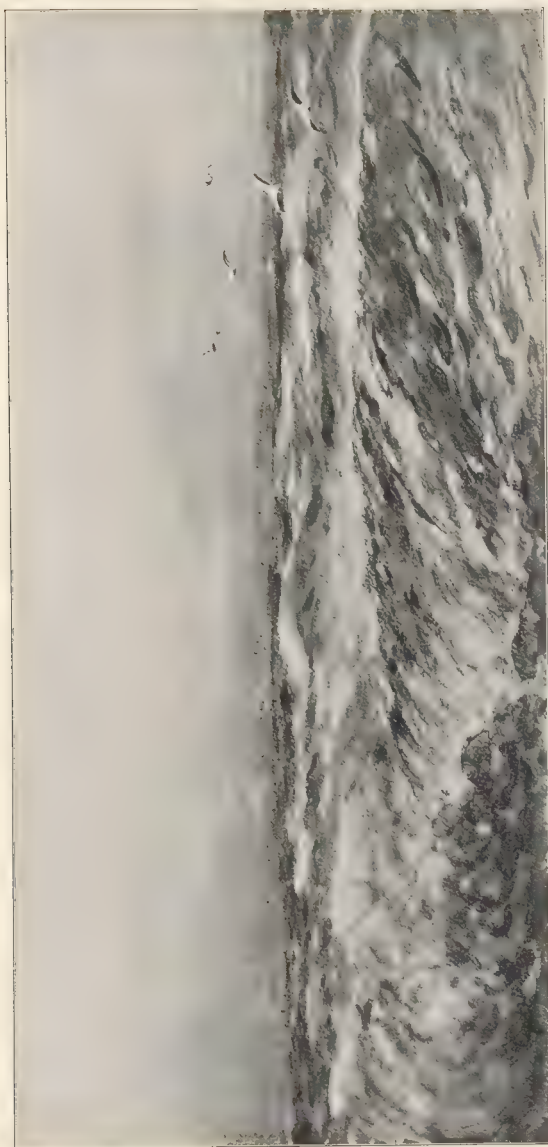




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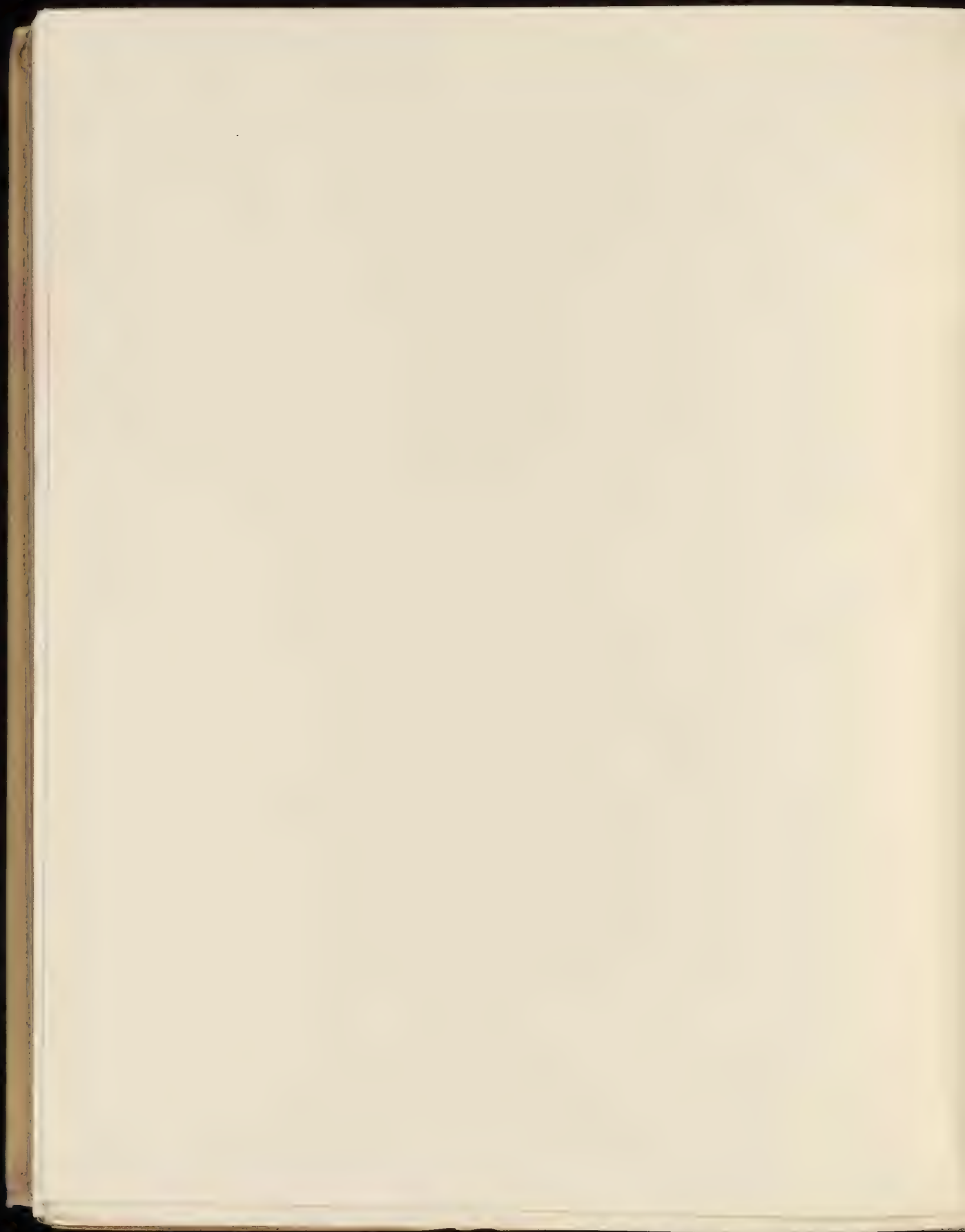
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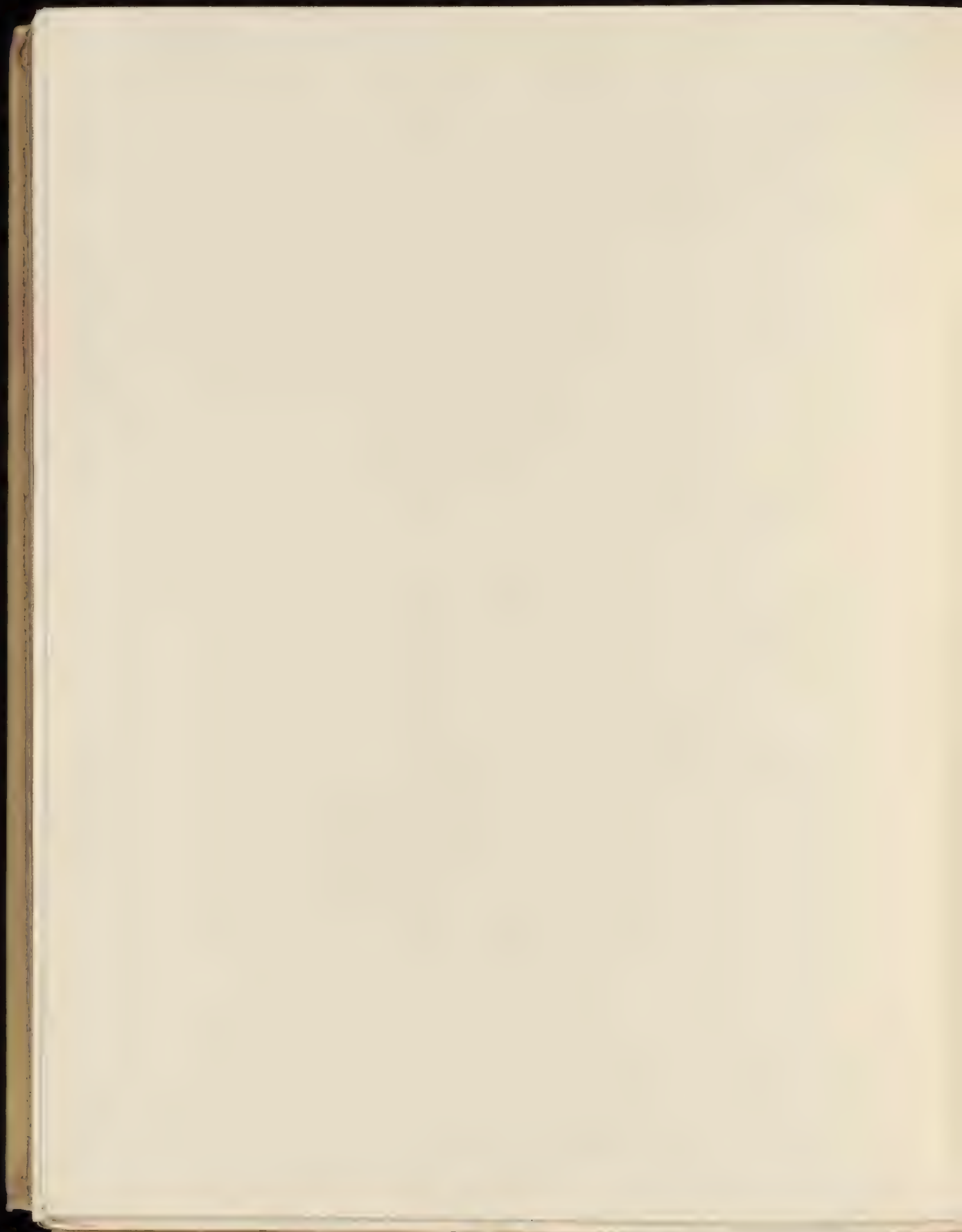
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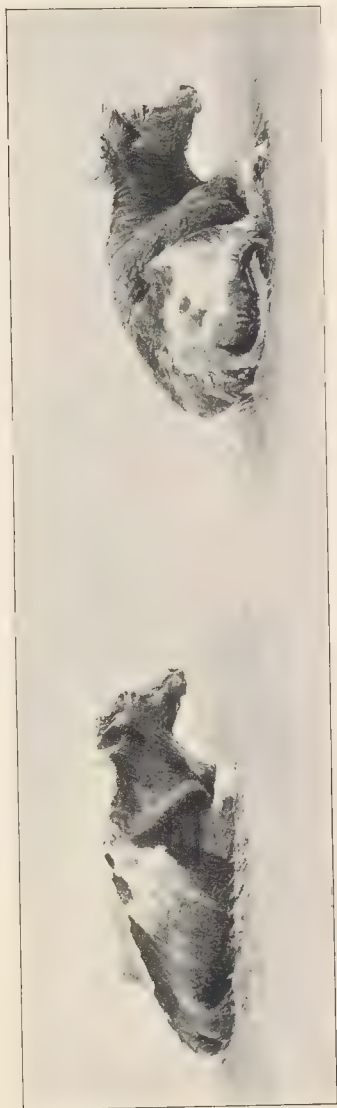




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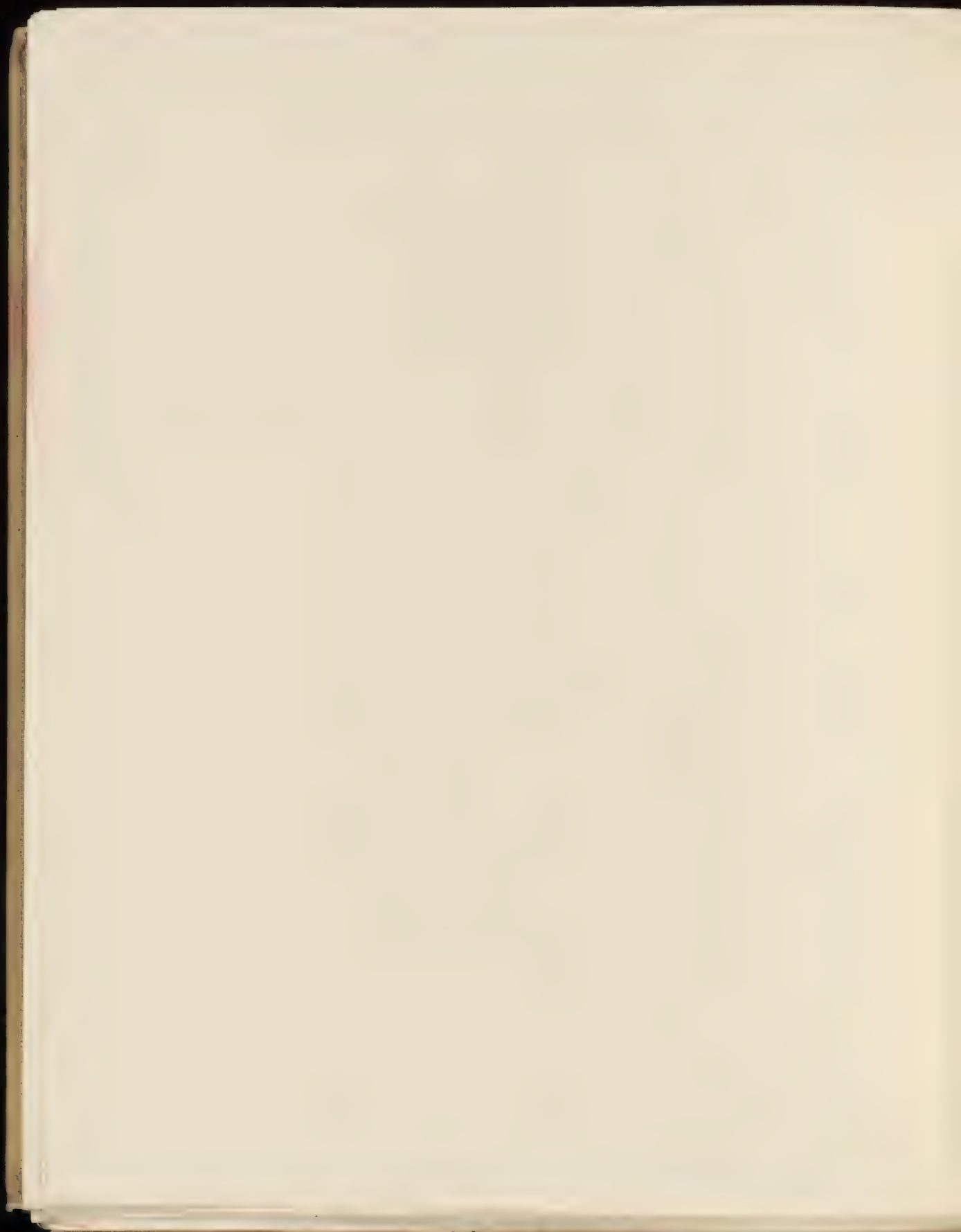
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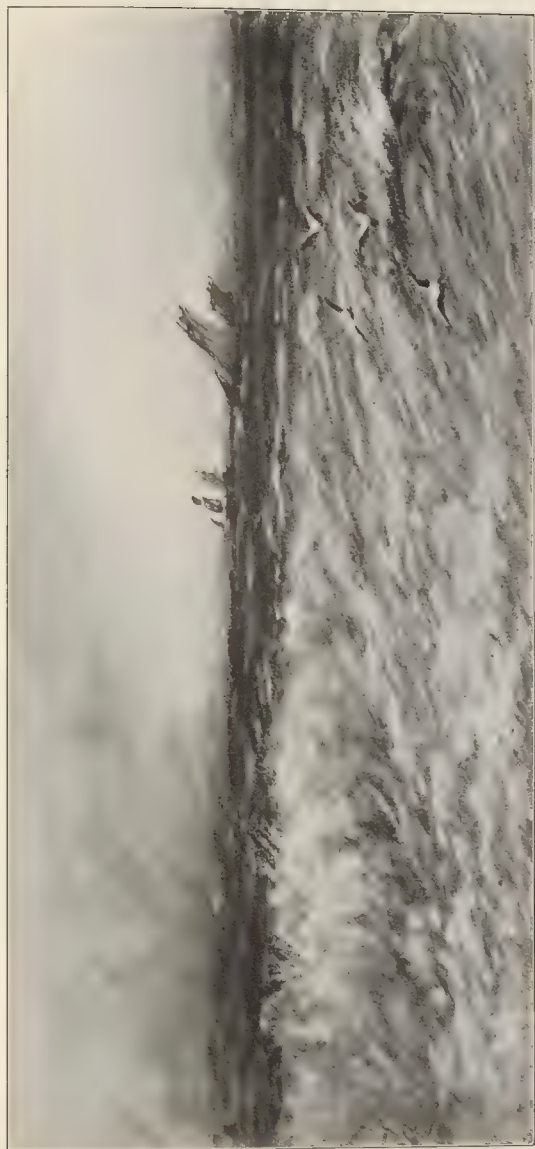




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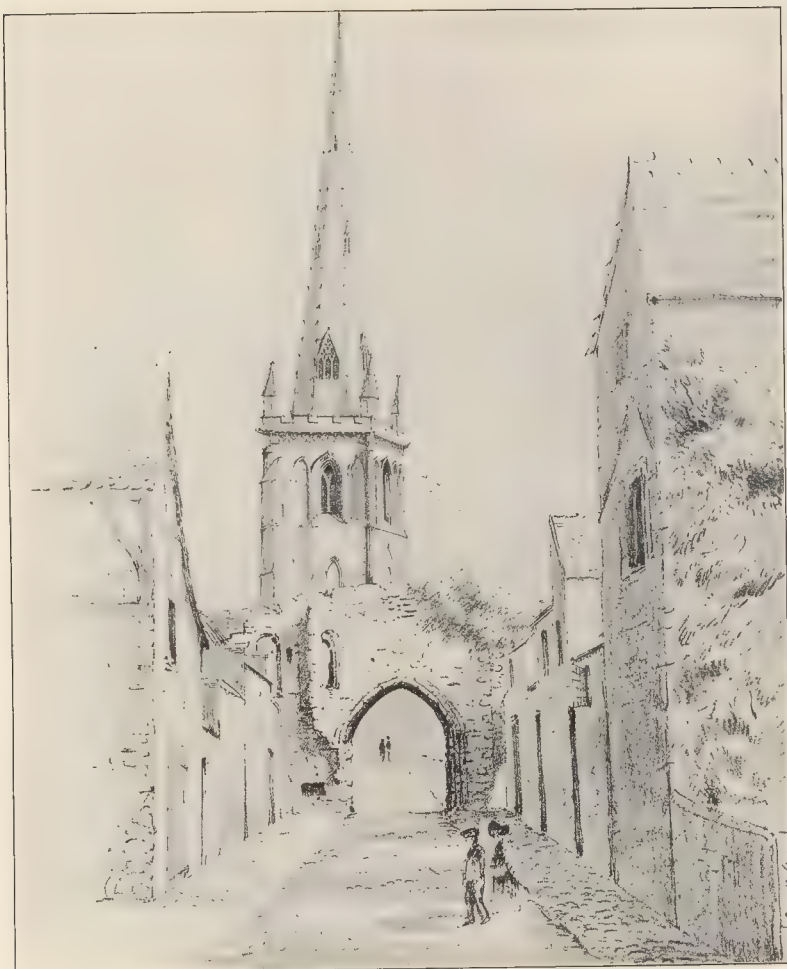




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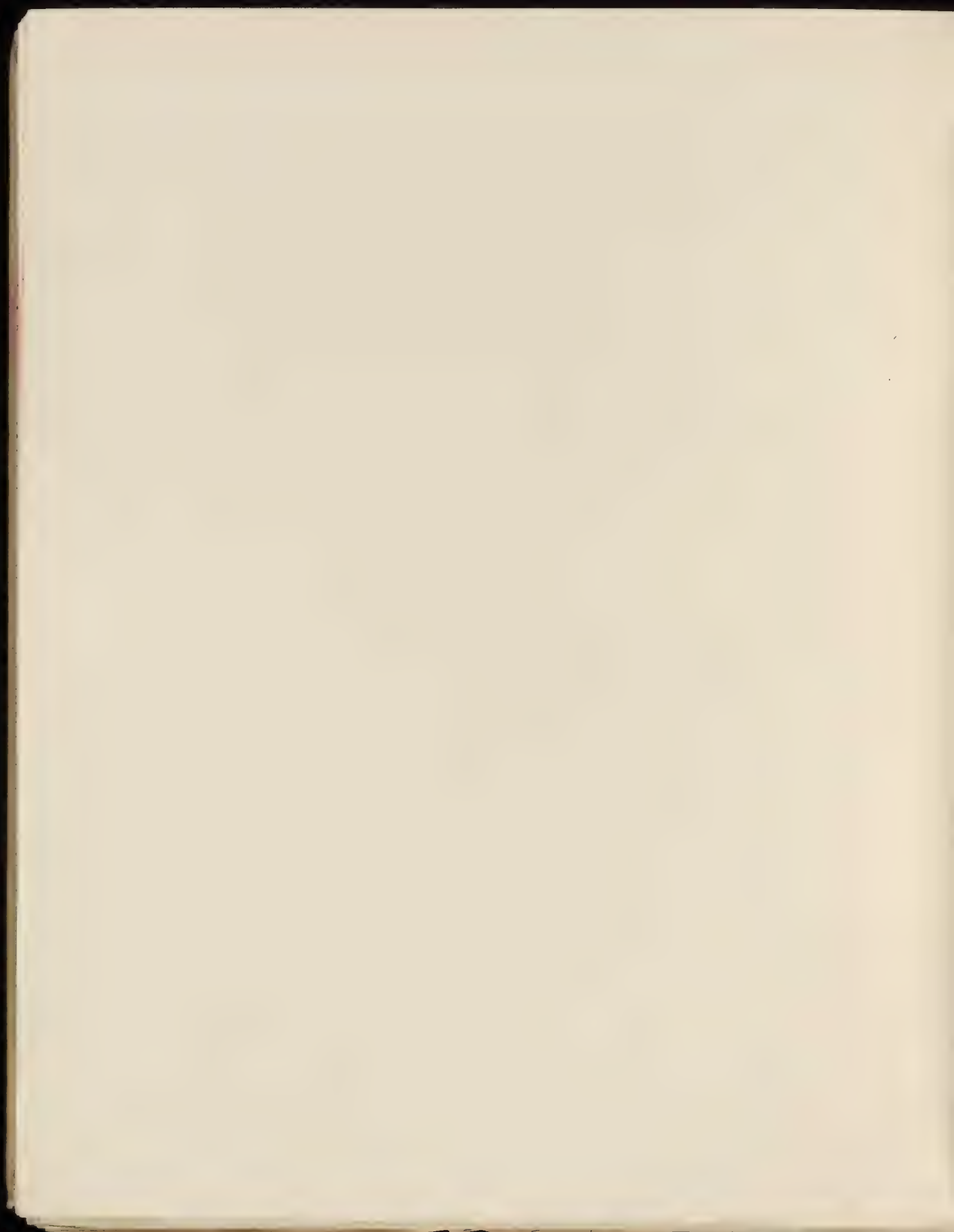
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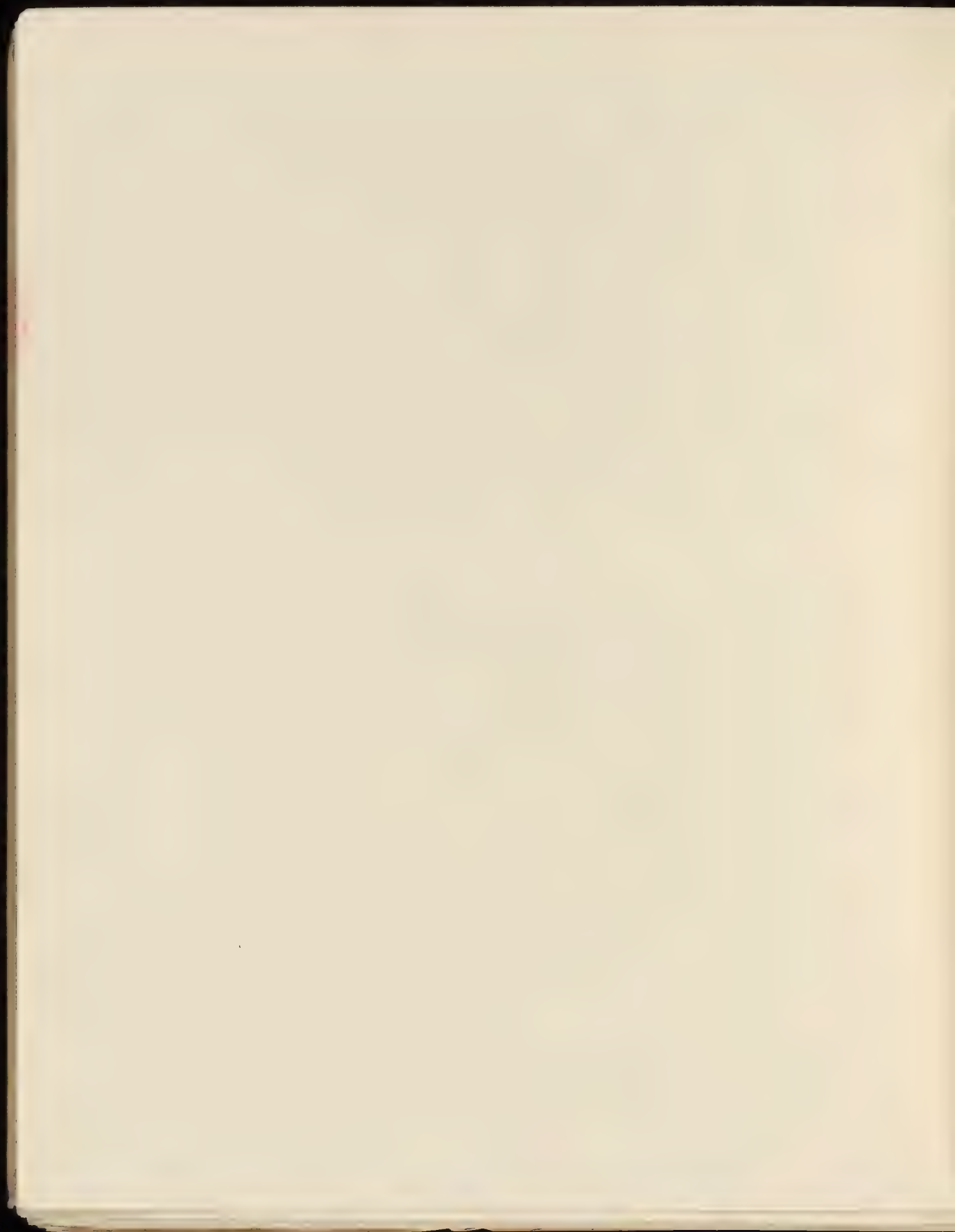
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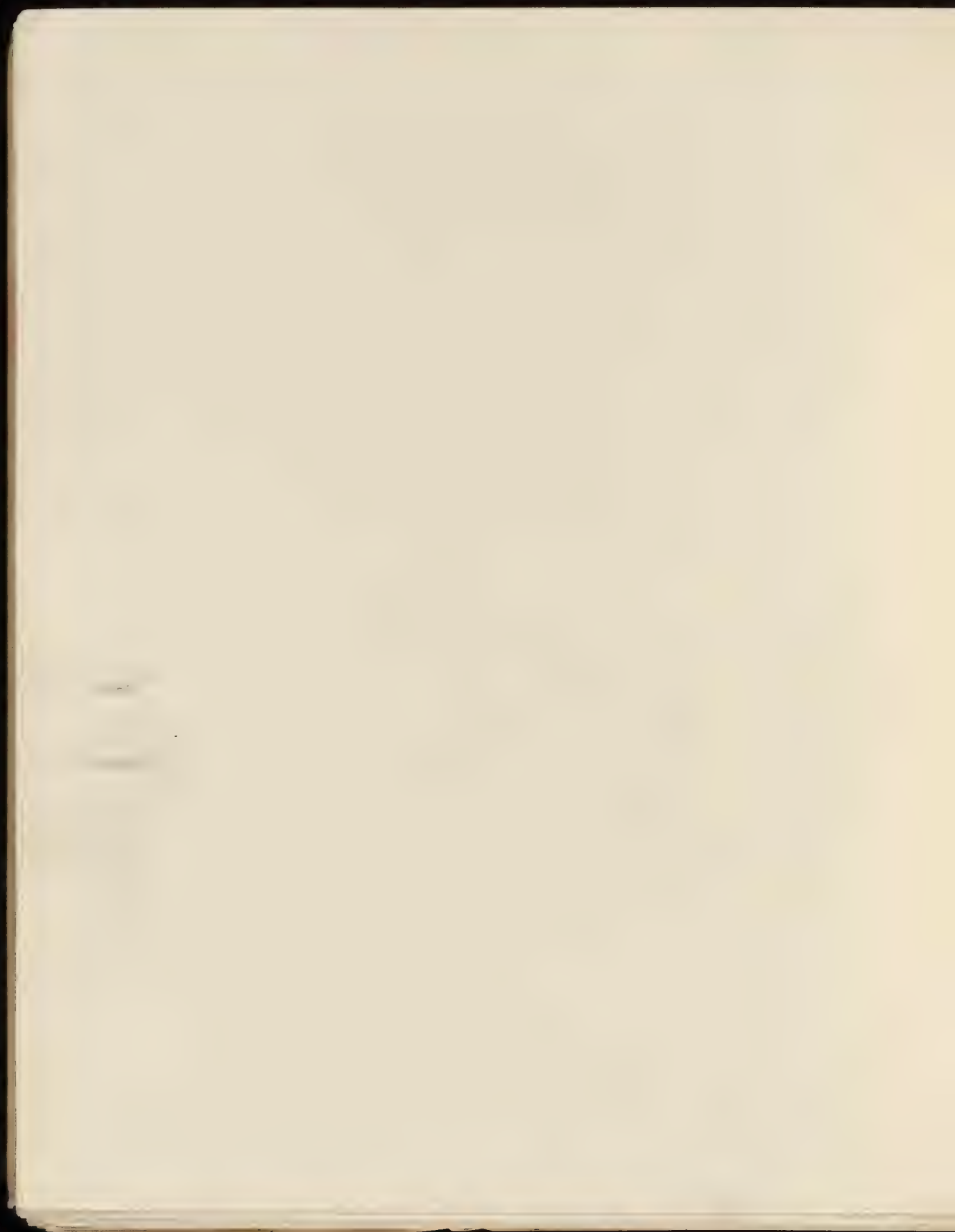
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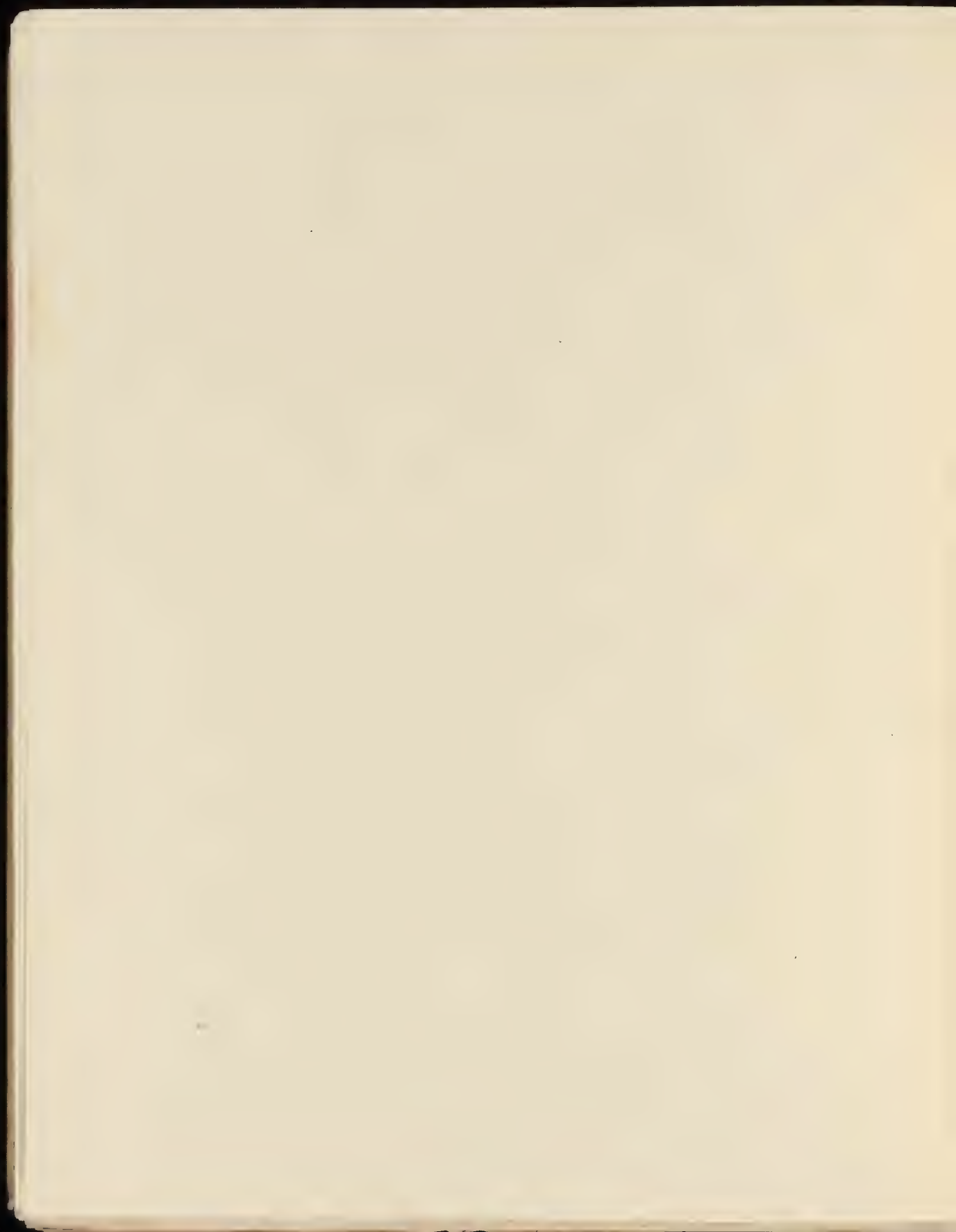
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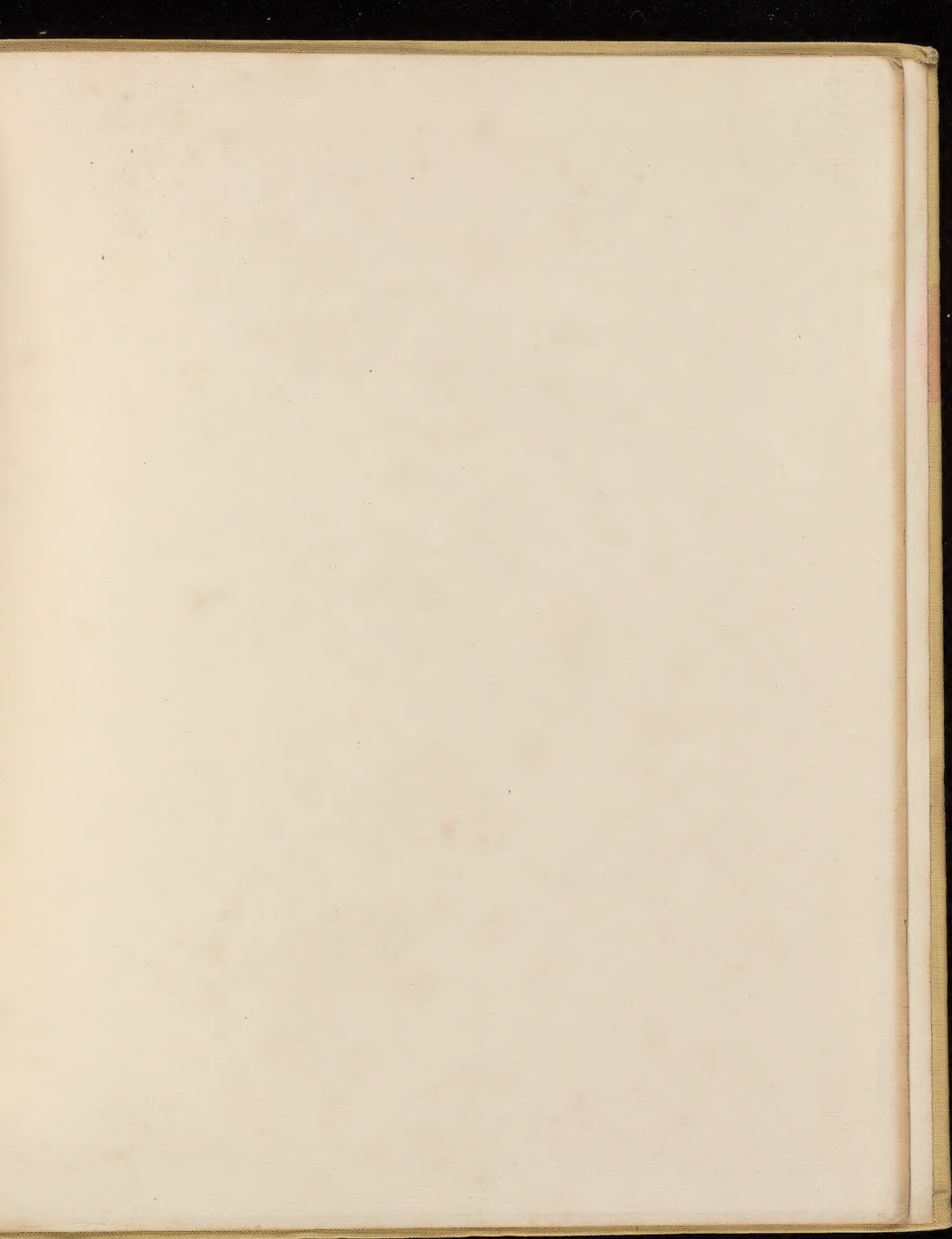
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